



Watersheds Messenger

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Summer 2001

Working to protect and restore Western watersheds

Western
Watersheds
Project



WWP's new Greenfire Preserve is surrounded by stunning panoramas.

photo by Teresa Tamura

Return of the Native: WWP's Greenfire Preserve

by Stew Churchwell

In his essay "Thinking Like A Mountain," Aldo Leopold tells the story of a time when he worked for the Forest Service in Arizona. He and his crew spotted several wolves by a river and took aim on the pack. After the shooting, Leopold recalls reaching an old female wolf "in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes."

"I realized then," Leopold wrote, "and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes — something known only to her and the mountain."

In the spirit of Leopold's revelation and essay, Western Watershed Project's Greenfire Preserve is being restored to its native state on the East Fork of the Salmon River.

Many WWP members aren't familiar with our activities at Greenfire, and some not even with its origins, so I think it's appropriate to start from the beginning. In June 2000, a conservationist and friend of WWP purchased a 440-acre former ranch along the East Fork, and a management agreement was reached with WWP, then Idaho Watersheds Project. As WWP's Central Idaho director, I assumed the duties of preserve manager and moved to the property on Sept. 1.

Initially, WWP directors and administrators drew up four

short-term and several long-term objectives. The first priority was removing livestock from the property. We also wanted to coax a smooth transfer of water rights and Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service grazing permits attached to the property to the new property owner, Valley Sun L.L.C.

Another short-term objective was to meet with various agencies to build relationships with potential partners who might help us in our restoration efforts.

Long-term objectives include • restoring Greenfire to a self-sustaining preserve of native habitat and retiring three U.S. Forest Service and three BLM grazing permits attached to the property • creating an education center where people can learn about properly functioning native habitat, and where universities and their students can use the property for seminars and research projects • making Greenfire available for conferences and visits by the media.

September-October

We had problems transferring the BLM grazing permits right off the bat. The previous owner had signed over the Bradshaw Basin permit to another grazing permittee. Eventually, the permit was transferred to Valley Sun.

We met with various state and federal agencies, including the

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Greenfire: Save the Date, Seize the Day

It's a chance to camp under the stars along the East Fork of the Salmon River. And it's an opportunity to see and understand watersheds restoration in the cradle of the Salmon-Challis National Forest.

We invite all WWP members and supporters to WWP's inaugural Greenfire Revival Sept. 14-16 at our new preserve on the East Fork of the Salmon River in central Idaho. Activities include birding excursions, field tours, book seminar, watersheds discussions and a grand tour of the 440-acre Greenfire property.

Three meals will be provided Saturday and breakfast is included Sunday. The Al Yates Trio will supply dance music Saturday night.

For registration, directions and more information, call WWP at (208)788-2290 or send e-mail to wwp.westernwatersheds.org. Suggested donation is \$50. Space is limited, so please register early.

For on-line registration and a schedule of events, visit the Greenfire section of our website at www.westernwatersheds.org.

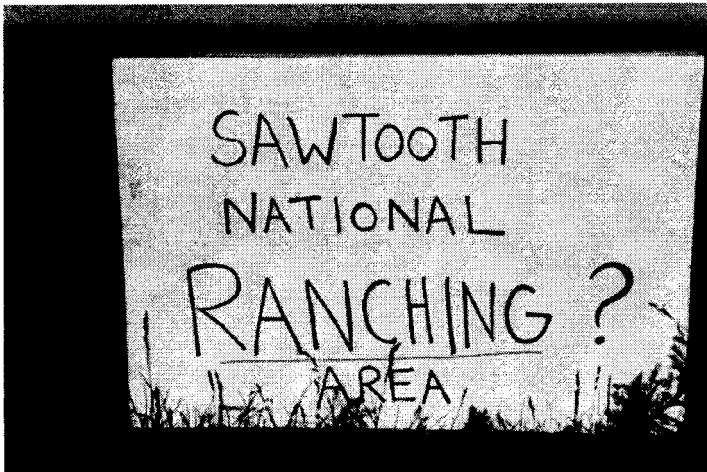


photo by Becca Wiegand

Will livestock take priority over wildlife in the SNRA?

WWP, ICL Sue SNF To Protect Wolves

On August 7, 2001 Western Watersheds Project and the Idaho Conservation League filed a lawsuit in federal District Court in Boise, Idaho, against the Sawtooth National Forest for failing to protect wolves.

The lawsuit is a result of SNF's failure to comply with the 1972 federal statute that created the 750,000-acre Sawtooth National Recreation Area, and the Sawtooth National Forest Plan, which was completed in 1987.

Both legal authorities require the U.S. Forest Service to give priority to wildlife, recreation and fisheries over livestock grazing in the SNRA. The lawsuit asks that the court order the USFS to determine if its management of livestock significantly impairs recreation, fisheries and wildlife, including wolves, before continuing to authorize annual livestock use in the SNRA.

The increase in the number of wolves and wolf packs in central Idaho since wolf reintroduction commenced in 1995 has resulted in more wolf-livestock interactions. One conse-

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Defining the Management

by Jon Marvel

Western Watersheds Project executive director Jon Marvel presented the following speech on June 8 at the Farm Foundation's Bennett Roundtable in Sun Valley, Idaho.

I would like to thank the officers and staff of the Farm Foundation for the invitation to participate on this panel today. I would also like to thank Toni Purves of the Foundation for her prompt responses to my questions about the panel and the Bennett Roundtable.

Our theme today is "Local Impacts of National Policy" and the conflicts arising from the management of publicly-owned resources. In developing some ideas related to this theme, I would like to present them to you in four categories which, I think, provide a reasonable defining framework for understanding national public policy in the administration of public lands and how those policies affect all of us. In choosing these categories I wish to emphasize that it is government policies which have historically defined how natural resources are used and who benefits from them.

As public beliefs and values shift over time, those policies may no longer continue to serve the needs of all Americans.

The four categories are Dominion, Dependence, Denial and Deregulation.

Dominion is a concept derived directly from the Judeo-Christian tradition and specifically from Genesis 1, Verse 28, where the King James Bible states: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

That the Bible itself directs humankind to "subdue" the earth and have "dominion" over the fish, the fowl, and "every living thing that moveth upon the earth" has colored every aspect of Western Europeans' relationships with the natural world for the past two millennia. The belief in Dominion over all life on Earth has been the motivation, in my opinion, of all of the direct and indirect consequences of the development of agriculture wherever descendants of European Judeo-Christian cultures have settled.

This cultural and religious reality has defined all of the European settlement of North America as well as most federal government land management decisions until the recent past. Absent from this belief paradigm was another part of the Bible: Genesis 2, Verse 15, which reads: "The Lord God took and placed the human in the garden of Eden, to serve it and protect it."

As the Catholic bishops of the Northwest have discussed in their Pastoral Letter Project for the Columbia River Basin, this part of Biblical understanding — the understanding of the need for stewardship — has not informed very many of the historical natural resource management decisions made by our ancestors who primarily came to this continent from Europe and who defined how natural resources were developed and employed.

The result of this cultural pre-eminence of the Biblical idea of Dominion instead of the Biblical idea of Stewardship has, in my opinion, brought us as co-owners of the natural resources of public lands to the current moment of unresolved and continu-

of Our Public Lands

ing conflict and disagreement over their disposition and use.

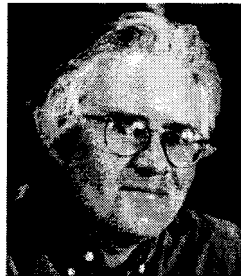
After Dominion comes Dependence. Virtually all extractive uses of natural resources, especially in the arid West, require, directly or indirectly, the financial support of the federal government and to a lesser extent local and state government.

This state of Dependence for natural resource users, whether they are loggers, miners or ranchers, is manifested in the administration of public lands with little regard for cost as long as the status quo interests continue to be served and sustained. Public lands ranching costs the U.S. government about \$400-\$500 million a year in direct and indirect subsidies. This is a number developed by the Competitive Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. This cost is borne by the taxpayers with little or no benefit but with impact in the way of unwelcome environmental damage, including the destruction of fisheries, recreation opportunities, wildlife habitat, and water quality, as well as the inexorable diminution of biodiversity.

Even on private agricultural lands in the West, government agricultural support has become so disproportionate that 100 percent of the net farm income in Montana last year came from federal government support payments of one kind or another. In a revealing article published last December in the *New York Times*, reporter Timothy Egan described the farm economy of Choteau County, Montana, whose county seat is Fort Benton. In this one county alone, \$54 million of government payments were made to farmers and ranchers last year, and more than 10 farmers were paid in excess of \$500,000 each.

Another *New York Times* article from May of this year found that 10 percent of farmers and ranchers receiving government "emergency aid" last year received more than 60 percent of the \$28 billion handed out last year by the Congress. Then Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman was quoted in the first article saying that what we were creating is a direct transfer of wealth from cities to rural areas with no accountability and little or nothing in return for those paying the bills.

At the local government level, ranchers and farmers benefit from numerous tax breaks and financial handouts. This year the Idaho Legislature passed a new law which exempts all personal property on farms from any property tax whatsoever. This means that massive center pivot irrigation systems are still depreciated for business tax purposes but cannot be taxed by county governments to support schools, clinics, roads and law enforcement. Across the country, agricultural landowners are exempted from full valuation for general ad-valorem property taxes. In one southwestern Idaho County, Owyhee, which has 10,000 residents, fewer than 100 property owners control over 750,000 acres of private land on which they pay on average 11 cents per acre per year in property taxes based on an assessed value of \$15.00 per acre for tax purposes. Their property taxes pay no more than 1.4 percent of the annual cost to operate the four school districts located wholly within that county. The real



Jon Marvel

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quence has been the killing of 35 wolves by federal gunners, unknown private parties and trappers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Division. Eighteen wolves have been killed on or adjacent to the SNRA in the past few years. Two weeks ago, two males wolves of the White Hawk pack were gunned down from a helicopter near Horton Peak in the SNRA.

A similar lawsuit is being considered against Grand Teton National Park, where cattle grazing is still permitted in occupied wolf, lynx and grizzly bear habitat.

WWP Wins Federal Restraining Order

On July 13 Western Watersheds Project won a precedent-setting order in federal District Court in Boise, Idaho, that bars any diversion of irrigation water from Otter Creek in central Idaho.

The ruling represents the first federal legal intervention in Idaho that gives precedence to the Endangered Species Act over state water rights in Idaho.

Otter Creek is a tributary of Panther Creek, which flows into the Salmon River. It is occupied habitat for bull trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In May, WWP and the Committee for Idaho's High Desert entered into a compact with the water right holder, rancher Verl Jones of Challis, Idaho, in which Jones agreed not to divert water this year from Otter Creek. On July 10, Jones' attorney, Bruce Smith, notified the court that Jones planned to divert water from Otter Creek despite the binding agreement with WWP and CIHD.

Federal District Chief Judge B. Lynn Winmill granted WWP and CIHD's request. The conservation groups were represented by WWP legal counsel Laird Lucas and Mindy Harm of the Boise office of the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies.

WWP Applies for 7,000-Acre Grazing Lease

On June 14 Western Watersheds Project applied for a controversial, expiring 10-year grazing lease on more than 7,000 acres of Idaho public school endowment land in a contiguous block of the headwaters of Goldberg Creek and on the lower reaches of Donkey Creek in the Pahsimeroi Valley of central Idaho.

The lease was cancelled by the Idaho Department of Lands on Oct. 17, 2000, for repeated, willful noncompliance with a 1995 grazing management plan by the leaseholder, Sulphur Creek Livestock, and its manager, Judd Whitworth. In his lease cancellation letter, Department of Lands director Stan Hamilton noted that Sulphur Creek Livestock exceeded the permitted stocking level on the lease for three years, repeatedly placed livestock on the lease before the permitted turnout date, kept livestock on the lease after the removal deadline, degraded the resources of the state land and failed to meet management objectives.

Readers will recall that WWP already sued Judd Whitworth for an irrigation diversion on Mahogany Creek in the Pahsimeroi Valley that dewatered the creek and killed bull trout.

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Greenfire Preserve (from Page 1)

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Model Watersheds Project, Bonneville Power Administration, Sho-Ban Tribes and Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The meetings consisted of property tours and discussions to initiate restoration projects. For its part, NRCS stepped up to the plate and offered to share costs for a planting project.

Because all livestock was removed from the property, we submitted a proposal to the Model Watersheds Project to relocate the jack-and-pole fencing along the riparian corridor as a replacement for the barbed-wire perimeter fence on the property. Jack-and-pole fencing is far more wildlife-friendly. Our proposal was denied, but we will continue to seek funding for this project.

There are five pivots that irrigate the majority of the property. Three of the pivots travel in a circle; two move in a semicircle. They are computer-controlled and can be programmed to do just about anything (when they aren't stuck in wheel ruts or knocked out of commission by any number of mechanical or electrical nightmares).

The more we learned about the property, the more we became concerned about the presence of toxic materials. We called the Department of Environmental Quality and took them on a tour of the property. A few items of concern were identified, and the former owners were directed to dispose of them. The houses, buildings and property were inspected before we took occupancy, and all were given a clean bill of health.

November-December

On the weekend of Nov. 4, we held an open house attended by about 60 WWP members and friends. Master chef **Claire Casey** cooked and choreographed yet another memorable feast.

It occurred to us that no place this special – a place now free of livestock — should be called a ranch, and we appealed to the gathered guests for help. To set the mood, I read “Thinking Like A Mountain” from Leopold’s A Sand County Almanac. The essay reflects the values we want to bestow on the preserve, so we kept it in mind as we considered a suitable name. Greenfire, submitted by **Ralph Maughn**, struck a chord with all of us.

Later in November, we learned about BPA’s high-priority projects. I met with BPA and IDFG representatives to determine if retirement of the Salmon River Breaks allotment would fit the criteria of these projects and if the agencies would support such a proposal.

The Salmon River Breaks is one of several allotments attached to the Greenfire property, and our suggestion was met enthusiastically by BPA. We drafted a proposal, which met with support from BPA and every other federal agency we contacted except the U.S. Forest Service. Even the BLM, who administers part of the allotment, was behind the proposal. We spent a good part of the next three months trying to convince the USFS of the merits of our proposal, but the issue was too politically charged for the agency to endorse. Postscript to the story: They haven’t seen the last of us yet.

January

In January, **Bill** and **Josephine** Lowe generously donated a four-wheel-drive Ford 250 pickup truck to WWP. Since then, I’ve discovered that Greenfire probably couldn’t operate at its

current level without the vehicle. We use it every day, and Bill and Josephine deserve a thousand thanks.

February

In February, a crew was brought in to remove fences on the property. The group soon became our planting crew as well. From February to mid-April, the workers carried out what some in the Challis area would consider heresy. They removed cross-fences and corrals from Greenfire. During an Experimental Stewardship meeting in Challis, one rancher who used to work at the property when it was a cattle ranch told me, “It really gave me heartburn to see you tearing out those corrals. It took me a whole day to put some of those posts in.” “If it makes you feel any better,” I replied, “we wore out two new handyman jacks just getting the posts out of the ground.”

March

In March, **Judy Hall** prepared and submitted two grant applications: an EPA 319 proposal and an application to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a Five-Star Restoration Challenge Grant. The proposals are for restoration projects on Greenfire and the state-owned section along Lake Creek, for which WWP holds the grazing lease.

Meanwhile, while fence removal continued at Greenfire, I went on a tour of the East Fork and Upper Salmon River with Mark Olson to locate areas where cottonwood and willow cuttings could be gathered. Locating an area suitable for collection is difficult due to degraded river systems that seldom flood (a natural and necessary process) and livestock grazing that is destroying most of the limited regeneration. There are cottonwoods to be found, but most of them are mature and often decadent.

April

In April, BLM authorized WWP to collect cottonwood and willow cuttings, and we spent seven days collecting cuttings and preparing them according to a planting guide provided by NRCS.

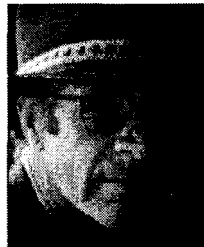
On April 23, a backhoe arrived and planting began. The cuttings were small cottonwoods and willow stalks measuring more than 8 feet.

We planted more than 300 cottonwood cuttings, upwards of 150 willow bundles and 500 cottonwood nursery stock. More than 90 percent of the willow cuttings and 75 percent of the cottonwoods are showing new leaves.

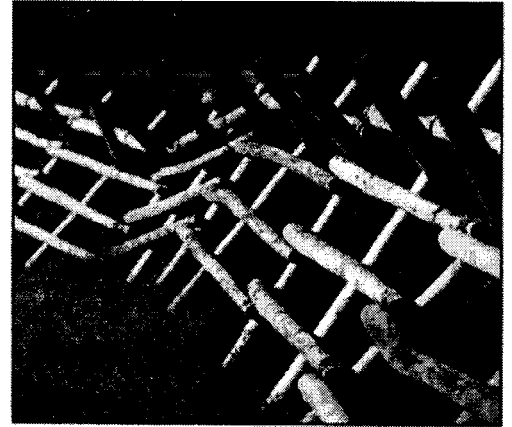
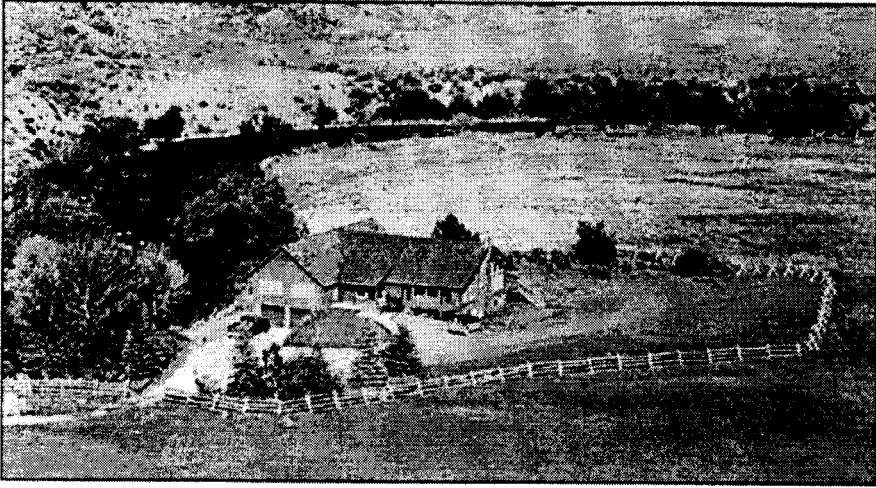
Also in April, we presented the EPA 319 grant proposal to the Basin Advisory Group and Watershed Advisory Group. At both presentations, livestock interests showed their true colors. Their opposition was long on politics and personal bias, and short on facts about water quality. We await word on the grant and believe we have an excellent chance to be funded.

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Opposite page: Greenfire Preserve in transition. Clockwise (from top left), the main house at Greenfire overlooks the East Fork of the Salmon River; fencing used to corral cattle is being removed to re-establish a corridor for wildlife; Greenfire manager Stew Churchwell checks one of 350 cottonwood cuttings newly planted on the property; evidence of the ongoing cleanup project at Greenfire, for which funding is needed; field monitors (from left) Becca Wiegand, Bill Wilson and Nate Green log data on grazing allotments into a database at Greenfire; willows ravaged by cattle are surrounded by new wildflower growth.

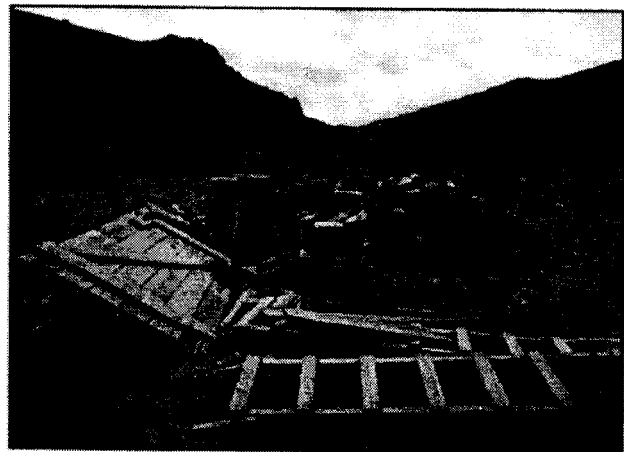
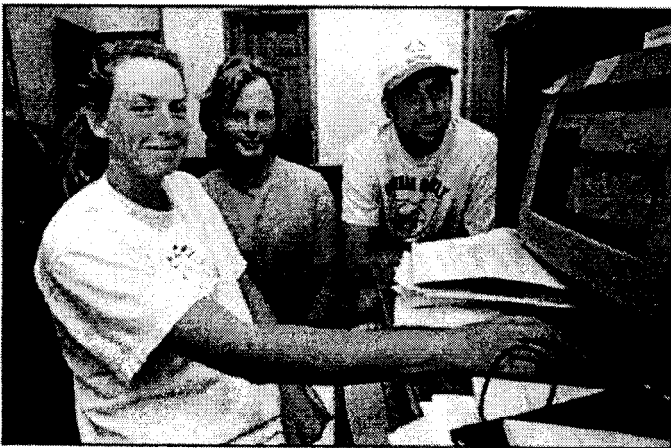


Stew Churchwell



Greenfire in Transition

photos by Teresa Tamura



Greenfire Preserve (from Page 4)

May

Early in May, WWP was visited by more angels. Gordon and Jennifer Younger donated a Ford Explorer to the Greenfire cause. Their gift has been a huge benefit for Greenfire projects and for our work throughout central Idaho.

We know what we want to do at Greenfire, and we are looking for successful models. In May, we decided it would be beneficial to bring in consultants from Bitterroot Restoration to help establish a plan and budget for the restoration of Greenfire.

Also in May, we put the irrigation systems into shape and began watering the hay fields at Greenfire. If we don't irrigate prior to the restoration of native species, we stand a good chance of seeing the fields consumed by exotic weed species - weeds that are difficult to eliminate. We also need to irrigate in order to keep our water right and grow forage for native wildlife.

June

We received funding from WWP contributors to bring Bitterroot Restoration consultants to Greenfire, and a schedule was set. The director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Restoration Funding also toured the property and expressed interest in a partnership.

Also in June, we received word that WWP's application for the Five-Star Restoration Challenge Grant was successful. The \$8,100 award gives us another source for more restoration efforts and can serve as matching funds for other grant proposals.

We continued to irrigate through June, but not without problems and significant expenses. Equipment breakdowns were

common, and electricity costs to power the various pumps and pivots proved high. Stuck pivots, plugged intake screens and broken drive lines were regular problems — all of this from a nearly new system.

July

By July 12, the grass at Greenfire was waist-high in places, so the pivots were shut down. The hand- and wheel-irrigation lines continue to operate, but the irrigation program in general clearly demonstrates that a natural, self-sustaining system is far better for all involved: WWP, wildlife and natural systems.

Resistance to Greenfire is keen in some corners. Livestock interests have attempted to block WWP's grant proposals. Inflammatory signs have been posted on Greenfire fence posts. Opponents have even resorted to littering the driveway with nails, resulting in a rash of flat tires. I think some interests fear we're going to open the eyes of the public. With any luck, we may do just that.

For years, WWP has fought to have exclosures established to demonstrate the potential for watersheds and uplands recovery. With the Greenfire preserve, we have an ideal opportunity to show what can happen to public lands when livestock grazing is eliminated. And with all the allotments tied to the Greenfire property, we can show the same results on nearly 50,000 acres of federal lands.

In Greenfire, we also have the authority to acquire more grazing permits and attach them to the preserve for retirement.

Our long-term goal at Greenfire is to create a living model that we and others can learn from. For this to happen, we need only to look to our name for inspiration and guidance in our restoration decisions.

Greenfire. May it always remind us to think like a mountain.

Farm Foundation (from Page 3)

source of funding for public school services in Owyhee County comes from the state sales and income taxes, which are collected primarily in Idaho's urban areas.

Just this week the reality of agricultural Dependency on federal handouts has again been made clear by news from Congress about an early rewrite of the 1996 Farm Bill proposed by Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa. The bill would apparently guarantee \$50,000 to each farmer in return for some conservation commitments. This proposal, I am told, has already been endorsed by the National Corn Growers Association and the American Soybean Association, two influential farm groups.

Dependency on government largesse is the defining motif of agriculture and other natural resource extraction groups in the United States. All of this Dependency on government carries with it a curious fact of natural resource management disagreements: Denial of reality. This is perhaps the defining characteristic of resource - use groups whether on public or private lands. The nonagricultural public is presented over and over again in all media outlets with the forthright, independent, self-reliant and self-sufficient farmers and ranchers. Virtually no mention is ever made of the remarkable level of government dependency of all agricultural users of public land natural resources. In fact, farmers, ranchers, loggers and miners routinely disparage any government involvement in their lives.

This level of Denial would be described by most psychologists as pathological, and I would argue that it is the inherent

psychological conflict between the belief system of public land resource users, which emphasizes independence, a belief in free market capitalism and a general distrust of government, and the reality -- absolute dependence on government by the same groups -- which accounts for the anger directed at government and environmentalists by these groups.

Denial extends to a curious form of self-righteousness, which manifests in claims of absolute rights to access to natural resources such as forage for livestock, timber, water and minerals on public lands. It carries further into a denial of any accountability for externalized environmental costs such as the loss of wildlife habitat, predators, clean water, opportunities for solitude and renewal which the etymology of the word "recreation" underlines.

How then do we break out of this unfortunate world of government maintenance of the status quo in public land use at the expense of larger public benefits which could occur if things were different?

Of course, those of us in conservation work have some legal tools available to us which can help destabilize the current entrenched system, and we use them all the time. They include the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts, the Endangered Species Act, the NEPA, the NFMA, the FLPMA and various agency regulations such as Bruce Babbitt's Range Reform of 1995. We cheerfully use these to help change traditional destructive uses of public lands. At the same time, I would suggest that util-

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Bison, Not Cattle, Belong in the West

By Louise Wagenknecht

Shortly after sunrise on a morning in mid-June, I stood with a group of people on a little hill in Lamar Valley in Yellowstone National Park. We looked down on the winding Lamar River, and across it to the broad alluvial plain where small bunches of bison and pronghorn antelope grazed. Some of us searched the valley with binoculars, or adjusted the half-dozen spotting scopes that stood on tripods nearby, aimed at the morning's main attraction: a sow grizzly bear and her twin cubs, feeding on the remnants of an elk carcass.

A hundred yards or so beyond the bears, a bull bison rubbed his ponderous head against a fallen cottonwood log. Seated a respectful distance from the bears were six wolves. Ravens and magpies fluttered and stalked around them.

To see wolves and grizzlies together is not that common in Yellowstone, so there was a hushed excitement in our little group. We watched the scene for more than two hours, taking turns looking through the scopes, until at last the sow strode away, her great silver shoulders rolling, her long steps eating up the ground toward the distant timber, the cubs scrambling behind her.

The wolves moved in, gnawed the white ribs for a while, rolled and played a little, then rose and trotted off, past the unconcerned bison and antelope. A coyote appeared out of nowhere and moved in cautiously to grab what he could before the ravens and magpies demolished it.

This was the high point of our weekend trip. A close second was the opportunity to see Yellowstone's famous bison and observe their grazing behavior. Bison don't seem to graze heavily on the edges of ponds and wetlands. The small streams meandering through Yellowstone's wet meadows are bordered by undisturbed sedges and rushes; the bison graze away from the water, while cattle would have been right down on the stream



Louise
Wagenknecht



Yellowstone National Park: where the buffalo roam
photo by Teresa Tmurra

banks. As long ago as the early 19th century, Hudson Bay Company diarists were writing what modern bison ranchers confirm: that the animals don't linger in riparian areas if given a choice. But there's nothing like witnessing something for yourself. It was one more confirmation to me that bison belong in the West's mountains and plains, and cattle don't.

It's not the fault of the cows. They are what their evolutionary history in the humid woodlands of Europe has made them. They are browsers as well as grazers, creatures who once boasted formidable horns and could back into a thicket to protect their calves against predators. Even in the New World, they ran wild and multiplied in the mild climate of eastern Texas. They never asked to be turned into polled meat factories and abandoned on the range to the mercies of harsh winters, cancer eye, larkspur poisoning and snakebite.

In all the states surrounding Yellowstone, for instance, cattle simply cannot survive — on or off public land — without extensive human assistance. This assistance continues to exact a fearful price on the area's land and water.

But things are changing, on several fronts. Eating breakfast later that morning at Mammoth Hot Springs, I read two pieces of news tucked into the business section of the Billings Gazette. One was the second earnings warning by McDonald's in two quarters. A slowing economy and the mad cow disease fiasco in Europe are eating into its profits. The other was that Tyson Foods, the world's biggest poultry producer, has been told by a Delaware judge that it can't back out of its offer to buy IBP, the giant beef packing corporation, after all. (Tyson got cold feet after learning that IBP had exaggerated its net worth.)

I doubt that these two events are good news for cattle prices. The economics of "traditional" ranching are about to converge with a growing public awareness of the ecological damage inflicted on the West by cattle. When the two meet — and I am confident that they will — the West's native ungulates will be there, waiting in the wings.

Farm Foundation (from Page 6)

mately having government authorization of greater use of free market solutions will more quickly resolve many of our public land conflicts.

Deregulation, or the opening of the fiscal basis of public land use allocations, is my final category. Deregulation would involve opening up closed and remarkably socialistic government programs to financial solutions. For example, conflicts over de-watering of streams by irrigation diversions can be solved by permitting the sale of water rights and the authorization of transfer of existing agricultural water uses to in-stream flow with the original date of priority left intact. In the case of public lands ranching, the full recovery of government costs associated with administering the use and the opening of a

competitive market for conservation use of grazing allotments with private and government funding will provide returns to ranchers and recovery of damaged ecosystems. Instead of simply continuing to hand out subsidies, whether in the form of direct payments or tariffs and other indirect supports to ranchers and farmers, we need to deregulate in order to phase out the absurdly entrenched and unreal economic existence of much public land extractive use.

As a nation we do not have to act to change anyone's belief in Dominion in order to end Dependency and Denial. We can do it through Deregulation and the introduction of free market economic forces an idea which is at least as strong a part of American traditions as the Book of Genesis.

The Media Is the Messenger

By Keith Raether

Never one to mince words, H.L. Mencken maintained that the function of journalism is to "afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted."

In the American West, public lands are afflicted, and public lands ranchers, succored by federal welfare subsidies that annually total \$500 million across the country, are comfortable. The 20 largest welfare ranchers — a group that includes five billionaires — control more than 20 million acres of public lands.

Though loath to admit it, the few ranchers who are truly afflicted are plain evidence of a patent truth: Even with federal handouts, public lands ranching in the arid West is an irrational way to make a living and an unconscionable way to "love the land," as ranchers are wont to say.

And yet, while less than 3 percent of America's beef comes from public lands ranchers, 90 percent of the streams in the West are ravaged by misguided, mismanaged grazing practices. While no town in the West derives more than 2 percent of its employment from public lands ranching, fisheries are destroyed, wildlife habitat degraded and recreation areas trashed by public lands grazing across the West.

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world," John Muir once wrote. Small wonder, then, that hunting, fishing and birding are shrinking; that passerines, sandhill cranes and bull trout are declining, threatened or endangered; that 38 wolves in Idaho have been killed since they were reintroduced to the state in 1995.

If the responsibility of the media is to comfort the afflicted, then it is the charge of the environmental community to lead the media to the afflicted — in this case, the victimized public lands of the West.

WWP's achievements and authority as a conservation monitor warrant national attention, and it's one of my jobs to see that we get it. While increasing coverage in Idaho's press



Keith Raether

only reinforces our profile, the public lands battle won't be won through media that endorses a governor who refers to wolves as "flesh-eating carnivores" (sic).

How do we engage the national press to live up to Mencken's mandate? Here, I trust, are some of the ways:

In two months we've built a national media directory that numbers 127 individual contacts. Eleven news services also reside there. Every reporter, editor or free-lance writer in the directory now receives news of every action we take.

We've also registered WWP in the affiliate program of the Environmental News Network, an international, Internet-based news service. Under the program, we post all of our news on ENN's home page at no charge. The website sees more than 100,000 visitors a week.

I've carried forward from my tenure at ENN an association with Environmental Media Services for our work at WWP. With headquarters in Washington, D.C., and offices in Seattle and San Francisco, EMS is a vital liaison between environmental groups and national media.

News of our work also travels to the Society of Environmental Journalists for publication in its newsletter and circulation through the SEJ Tipsheet.

We've expanded our website, coordinating new content through web designer Jacqueline Harvey. A full section devoted to WWP's Greenfire Preserve, captured in words by Stew Churchwell and images by photographer Teresa Tamura, is our newest addition to the site.

We're also expanding our newsletter. The value of Watersheds Messenger is twofold: media resource and fund-raising tool.

Several projects in our strategic media plan are permanent works in progress. As news occurs, we want to produce longer feature stories to supplement our standard releases. We started this practice with the wolf lawsuit story.

Our running editorial dialogue has escalated in the local media. In July alone, six WWP editorials or comments were published in newspapers across the state. Our goal is to spark the same production from reporters and editorial writers on the

See Page 13

Camping (and Coping) With Cow Poop

By Ginger Harmon

What smells worse to a backcountry hiker than cow poop? What causes more water pollution than cow poop? What is more disgusting in a beautiful place than cow poop?

A dead cow lying rotten and bloated smells far worse and is surely more disgusting than cow poop.

At the trailhead for The Gulch, a major tributary of the Escalante River, a Bureau of Land Management sign announces to hikers that they are about to enter "The Gulch Outstanding Natural Area."

The sign is a lie.

Is it possible to have an outstanding natural area when it has a ubiquitous cover of cow manure? The Gulch could be an area of outstanding natural beauty. A year-round stream is



Ginger Harmon, founding board member, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, and WWP member

encased by sheer sandstone walls of every shade of red. Huge cottonwoods stand tall, their green leaves providing sharp contrast to the colorful cliffs. Indian sites abound, from lithic scatters to rock art panels to granaries to cliff dwellings.

The reality, though, is that The Gulch is an ongoing cow catastrophe. Soil-holding grasses and sedges have been grazed to stubble. The streambed is shallow and wide and often muddy, the result of cow hooves trampling and eroding the banks. Exotic weeds have invaded where native ground cover has been stripped away. Cow pies are everywhere.

The Gulch should have been named "Outstanding Area of Cow Devastation."

Cattle leave about 50 pounds of defecation behind them every day, not to mention a couple gallons of urine. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find a manure-free place to set up a tent in The Gulch. Worse for backpackers, poop that is deposited into water carries all manner of little critters harmful to humans, such as giardia and e-coli.

In 1992, after visiting The Gulch and witnessing the ugly

Utah's Willow Creek Ecology Joins WWP Effort

By Dr. John Carter

On May 18, Western Watersheds Project and Willow Creek Ecology finalized a memorandum of understanding to combine forces in our efforts to retire grazing from public lands and restore watersheds habitat.

Like WWP, Willow Creek Ecology, which I founded in 1996, exists to accelerate efforts for grazing reform on public lands. Our target is Utah.

While Willow Creek Ecology will continue to manage existing projects, new efforts in Utah are being launched under the aegis of WWP.

The qualifications I bring to the watersheds cause include a doctorate degree in ecology and 20 years overseeing an environmental consulting business in Utah. I've also spent the past 10 years using my background to fight the misapplication of science by federal agencies in the management of public lands.

Last year, my frustration with the lack of response from the U.S. Forest Service to scientific input, coupled with devastating evidence of public-lands abuse by livestock and wholesale denials and obfuscation by the USFS, compelled the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund to take on one of my cases. This was a so-called "forest health" case in the T.W. Daniel Experimental Forest in northern Utah.

The USFS allowed that the forest was in a declining state - a condition in which sustainability and resiliency were threatened by decades of logging, livestock grazing and fire suppression. But the agency failed to address the issues of livestock grazing and fire suppression in its solution to the problem.

Instead, the USFS proposed a 2,000-acre logging project as a "forest health" treatment to cure the problem. These are the kinds of decisions that motivate me.

Since May 18, our WWP operation in Utah has filed protests against grazing permit renewals for 35 allotments on BLM lands in northern Utah totaling over 750,000 acres. These allotments currently endure a total of 10,000 cattle and 32,000 sheep.

scars of cattle abuse and overuse, I became an "Interested Public" on The Gulch grazing allotment. As such, I have monitored the condition of the allotment and the actions (or lack of actions) of the BLM regarding the allotment. I have tried by begging, threatening, pleading and coercion to make the BLM do what the rules and regulations say the agency is required to do. I have seldom been successful.

On March 26, 1997, a dead cow was reported in the stream flowing through The Gulch. What followed is a typical example of the BLM's failure to take positive action where and when it is needed and, in fact, required.

The allotment permittee was told that he had to remove the cow immediately. In a letter to the permittee, the BLM stated: "Leaving a cow in the stream and not properly disposing of it is not only in violation of the federal regulations, it is also in violation of state laws."

The permittee did absolutely nothing about the dead cow. More than a month later, on May 2, he was warned: "If this cow is not removed from the stream and properly disposed of



Dr. John Carter and Kiesha, one of three akita assistants

In its environmental assessments, BLM has consistently failed to address issues of air quality, water quality, wildlife, soils and vegetation. Assisted by Brandon and Julie Chard of Castilleja Consulting, and Miriam Austin of Red Willow Research, I've surveyed many of these allotments and supplied detailed reports and analyses to the BLM.

These reports are also being forwarded to appropriate state agencies and political representatives in an effort to call attention to the flagrant betrayal of the public trust on these lands.

My noble assistants are my akitas. Each fall, Kiesha, Toqui and Niki, each carrying 25 pounds of equipment and food, take me into the Uintah Wilderness in Utah to survey watersheds and collect data on streams, soils and vegetation. The scientific evidence is used to show the USFS the intolerable level of degradation livestock are inflicting on this beautiful wilderness.

In the course of our field work, ungrazed watersheds are also surveyed. In these places we linger longest, hoping to see a lynx, bighorn sheep, wolverine or mountain lion - or maybe even one of the wolves that are rumored to be in the area now.

With grazing permits, dewatered streams, and forest plan after forest plan competing against watersheds and wildlife on 34,000,000 acres of public land in Utah, there is no shortage of work to be done. And there are miles to go before we sleep.

by May 10, citations will be issued and administrative actions may be taken against your grazing permit."

The cow was not removed. On May 12, two BLM range technicians disposed of the cow. The action required 16 hours of labor, one horse trailer, one pickup truck and two horses — your tax dollars at work. No citations were issued.

In the past nine years I have seen repeated transgressions by public lands permittees. I have witnessed repeated capitulations by the BLM. The BLM is, putatively, the steward of our public lands, yet the agency allows egregious abuse of the land. The Escalante area, including The Gulch, is a candidate for Wilderness designation. We cannot let it be trampled and destroyed by cattle.

One can still hike in The Gulch, though it is not a pleasurable experience. If you keep a bandana over your nose and your eyes on the slick-rock cliffs above, you might have a somewhat satisfying backcountry experience.

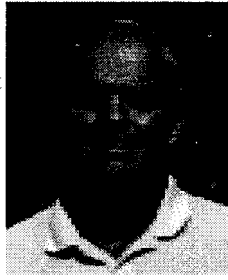
Then again, you might trip and take an unfortunate fall on a decomposing bovine carcass.

Things must change.

Public Lands Ranching: What Price Obstinance?

By Don Oman

As many of you know, I worked for the U.S. Forest Service for 35 years before retiring two years ago. I was the district ranger for Twin Falls Ranger District, Sawtooth National Forest, from October 1986 to May 1996. Following that, I was the ecosystem staff officer for SNF for three years.



In my career with the Forest Service, I worked on 12 national forests in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Utah. Since my formal schooling was in forest management, I worked with the range management folks frequently but was never in charge of a large range program until coming to Twin Falls. I had complained about grazing abuses on the Forest Service districts where I worked, but I never saw things change much, if at all. In the course of working in recreation, watersheds, soils, wildlife, fisheries, timber, special uses, minerals and fire, I got a few chances to take matters into my own hands.

One of six resources I was in charge of on the Wallace

Ranger District, Idaho Pan-handle National Forest, was recreation. Grazing on the district was not permitted because most of the area was heavily forested. We had a large day-use recreation development that served 300 visitors, with large cooking shelters and several family sites. The area was mostly meadow, which a neighbor's dozen cows about a mile away had discovered. These cows continually tramped holes in the meadow, grazed it off and littered the meadow and the large group sites (concrete under large roofs) with excrement.

Repeated attempts to get the owner to keep them away failed. Threats to trespass them failed. Since some of the cattle were fairly tame, we sauntered up to them one day in the recreation site and spray-painted huge US's on the sides of four cows and yearlings. We then ran them down the road -- again. They never came back. We decided the owner must have figured that if we could paint them, we could catch them.

While stationed on the Hoback Ranger District, Bridger-Teton National Forest at Jackson, Wyoming, we had constant trouble with regenerating timber-cutting areas damaged by cattle. The main source of the problem was ranchers who were salting in these cutting units. The cattle trampled young trees, and larger trees were skinned and broken from rubbing.

Repeated attempts to get the range conservationists to make the permittees salt away from these areas failed. One day, my two timber people and I went separate ways picking up salt blocks that were in or adjacent to cutting units. We came back with 37 blocks. We dumped them in the yard at the Forest

Service compound and told the range conservationists that this would be our standard practice in the future. That ended the problem, and mysteriously the new lodgepole pines began to grow straight and tall.

As district ranger on the Twin Falls Ranger District, I was finally in a position to do something about grazing abuse on this 320,000-acre piece of public land. I had a lot to learn about the range resource, but even I could tell the difference between tall grass and bare dirt! I quickly learned from my forest supervisor and forest range staff officer that it was not cool to use terms (relating to livestock grazing) such as roto-tilled, plowed, devastated, destroyed or nuked. My two very experienced range conservationists advised me that the very strongest term we could use was "heavily used."

I had two very experienced range conservationists in Ralph Jenkins and Ray Neiwert (both now retired), who wanted to see the rangelands and creeks managed properly. However, they had worked most of their careers for managers who knew how things had to be done in order to survive politically. One of the best compliments ever paid to me came from Ralph and Ray after we had been through years of battles (many of which

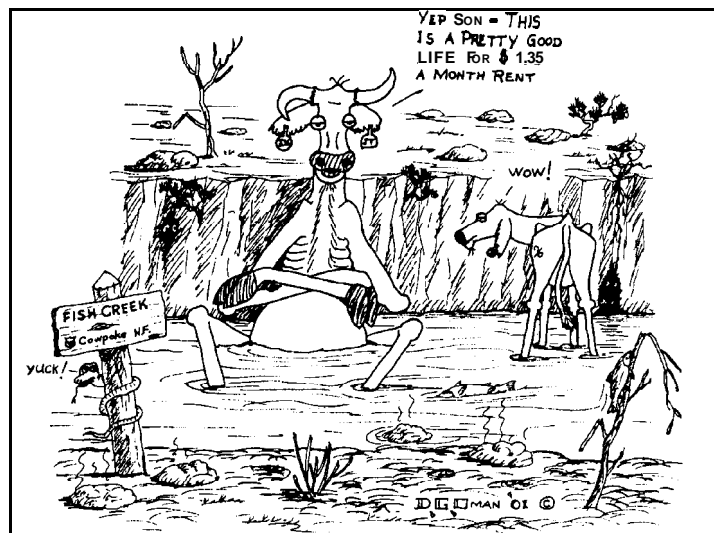
we won), to improve livestock management practices on the Twin Falls Ranger District. They told me that only in the final few years of their careers were they able to practice proper range and riparian management.

During my 10 years on Twin Falls Ranger District, one of my strongest allies was Jon Marvel and the Idaho Watersheds Project (now Western Watersheds Project). Jon came to my aid and worked effectively behind the scenes a number of times.

Later, as ecosystems staff officer, I had little influence with the forest supervisor when it came to the range resource, even though I was his primary staff officer for this and most other resources. My recommendations took a back seat to the advice of rangers, and in one case, the preferential treatment resulted in severe, widespread resource damage. During that time, Jon often had advice for me that I could do little about.

With improved management and 10 years of persistence, streams went into winter with heavy sedge and willow cover to protect them. Watercress increased again. Willow, aspen and cottonwood sprouts were abundant, forming large stands of young shrubs and trees. The vegetation in streams caught sediment and formed new banks, narrowing and deepening the water. Deep-rooted sedges began replacing shallow-rooted bluegrass along streams, creating stable, overhanging banks for better trout habitat. Beavers increased, quickly raising water tables in many streams.

When I left Twin Falls, all riparian areas were improving,



by Don Oman

See Page 12

News Briefs (from Page 3)

Conservation Groups Sue USFS and BLM

Western Watersheds Project and the Committee for Idaho's High Desert on June 7 filed a federal court lawsuit under the Endangered Species Act against the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management over hundreds of stream diversions on USFS and BLM lands in the Upper Salmon River basin. The suit was filed in federal District Court in Boise, Idaho.

The lawsuit maintains that the Salmon-Challis National Forest and the Salmon and Challis Field Offices of the BLM have failed to ensure that diversions on federal lands by ranchers and other private parties do not harm salmon, steelhead or bull trout — all species listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. The suit also contends that the diversions are "taking" the listed fish in violation of ESA. The suit asks that the court order the agencies to comply with the law to avoid killing ESA listed fish.

All of the diversions in these lawsuits are unscreened and unmeasured, and often take all of the water from tributary streams to the Salmon River. Twenty-six separate tributaries of the Lemhi River, one of the most important salmon spawning streams in Idaho, are dried up every summer by diversions which irrigate low-value forage crops such as grass hay and alfalfa.

WWP and CIHD did not sue the neighboring Sawtooth National Forest, which has taken positive steps to ensure that diversions in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in the headwaters of the Salmon River comply with the law.

Federal Court Settlement Stops Diversion on Mahogany Creek

Western Watersheds Project and the Committee for Idaho's High Desert have won their first victory in a campaign to restore stream flows in the Upper Salmon River basin for threatened and endangered fish. The case is the first of as many as 100 legal actions WWP may bring to test the supremacy of the Endangered Species Act against state water law.

In a preliminary injunction hearing on May 3 before federal District Court Judge B. Lynn Winmill in Boise, Idaho, the conservation groups reached a court-approved stipulated agreement with rancher defendants which will end forever the annual dewatering of Mahogany Creek.

While the case did not result in an injunction against the use of a state water right, that water right has effectively become impossible to use. The settlement does not bode well for the hundreds of other ranching water users in central Idaho whose wasteful practices have resulted in the dewatering of dozens of streams that are critical habitat for listed populations of salmon, steelhead and bull trout.

Federal Judge Awards WWP Another Victory

On April 12 federal District Court Judge B. Lynn Winmill denied a motion for summary judgment by LU Ranching and granted a summary judgment motion by Western Watersheds Project, which concurs with a BLM decision to institute a 53 percent reduction in grazing use in the Cliffs Allotment in

Owyhee County, Idaho.

The failed management of the 20,000-acre Cliffs allotment has been a contentious issue for decades. Finally the BLM and the federal court have taken a position to protect public resources without regard to the expense to public lands ranchers who have been abusing these public lands for more than a century.

WWP notes that with this decision in place, the BLM can reduce grazing as much as required to protect public resources without concern for the economic viability of any ranching operation.

Conservation Groups Seek Protection for Rare Idaho Flower

Western Watersheds Project, The Committee for Idaho's High Desert, The Wilderness Society and the Idaho Conservation League have filed an emergency listing petition seeking ESA protection of the slickspot peppergrass, a rapidly disappearing plant species unique to Idaho.

The four groups filed for legal protection of the rare flower, which is threatened with extinction by an invasion of nonnative weeds in the Snake River plain and the Owyhee plateau. The weed invasion is the result of livestock trampling and grazing, road construction and off-road vehicles.

WWP Partners File Grazing Lawsuit in Oregon

In March Western Watersheds Project, the Oregon Natural Desert Association and the Committee for Idaho's High Desert filed a complaint in federal district court in Portland requiring the Bureau of Land Management to implement the Bully Creek Land Area Management Plan grazing decision made in October 2000. The groups are also filing a motion for a temporary restraining order and/or preliminary injunction to prevent livestock turnout on the Bully Creek allotments unless the BLM complies with the law.

The LAMP decision affects over 268,000 acres and more than 20 grazing allotments on public land in the Bully Creek watershed in Malheur County near Vale, Oregon, including an 18,000-acre Wilderness Study Area, two Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and the South Fork of Indian Creek, which is eligible for wild and scenic river status.

These lands are acknowledged by the BLM to be in unacceptable condition with over 77 percent of the riparian areas in non-functioning or functioning-at-risk condition. The public lands provide habitat for elk, deer, redband trout and the threatened sage grouse.

Norcross Wildlife Foundation Awards Grant to WWP

Western Watersheds Project has received a grant of \$6,000 from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation in Massachusetts to help cover costs for new computer equipment.

The award was made in late May after a meeting of the Norcross board of trustees. Judy Hall, director of fund development for WWP, prepared the grant application, citing the organization's history, objective and long-term strategies in support of the grant request.



Western Watersheds directors, supporters and staff at the annual membership and board meeting May 18, 2001 in Hailey: front row (from left), Louise Wagenknecht, Dr. John Carter, Gene Bray, Dr. Don Johnson; back row (from left), Bob Wagenknecht, Gordon Younger, Miriam Austin, Kelley Weston, Laird Lucas, Jon Marvel, Dale Grooms, Debra Ellers, Larry Walker, Barbara Hakala and Judy Hall.

We extend special gratitude to the following WWP supporters, each of whom contributed \$100 or more to our efforts since the publication of our previous newsletter. Many thanks for your generous support.

Miriam Austin

Debra Ellers and Dale Grooms

Richard Kolbrener

Christel Nordhausen and Fred Tester

Seattle Packaging Corp.

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Larry Walker

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Royce and Elaine Ward

Gene Bray

David and Charlene Jackson

Ralph and Jackie Maughan

Thomas Pringle

James Shake

John Suria

Gordon and Jennifer Younger

Public Lands Ranching (from Page 10)

many of them dramatically. The next year conditions deteriorated quickly, and even with numerous reports and photos as evidence, the ranger who took over was allowed to do things "his way." That fall, I saw creeks that had been in dramatic recovery for five or six years taken back to what they were when I first saw them in the fall of 1986 — rototilled, plowed, devastated, destroyed and nuked. The range conservationists in authority, who wanted to practice good management, quickly found that the permittees and their political palsies were again in charge.

For roughly 130 years, livestock grazing has degraded the lands in this area. On the Twin Falls Ranger District, I saw the devastation. In the early days, this general area was grazed by 175,000 cattle and 80,000 sheep, with no control and no season of use except heavy snow. Travel up the South Fork Shoshone Creek and you will see large areas of exposed bedrock as a result of this "heavy use." The huge numbers of animals compacted the soil and removed all vegetation where near water. Erosion did the rest.

Virtually every creek on the district was down-cut from 5 to 30 feet as a result of livestock grazing. These down-cut streams drained thousands of acres of wet meadow and turned them into dry, sagebrush flats. Heavy grazing removed willow, cottonwood and aspen sprouts, leaving only old, decadent or dead remnants in many drainages.

With the evidence of 130 years of abuse and degradation from grazing so evident, it didn't seem much of a mystery to us on the Twin Falls Ranger District that the continual damage

had to end. How can we provide for the resource needs and enjoyment of future generations if we continue to degrade the rangelands and riparian areas that we have been entrusted by the public to manage? If so much damage could be done in 130 years, just think what things would be like in another 200 years of current management?

Any public land manager is not doing his or her job if the resources of water, soil, wildlife, fish, recreation and scenic beauty do not improve under their control. The downward trend has to end. No activity should take place on the public's lands unless those resources can be improved. To do otherwise permanently closes options for the future.

When I first came to the Sawtooth National Forest in 1986, there was little public concern about livestock grazing on public lands. Public lands permittees ran the show, backed by powerful political allies. Now the public is becoming much more aware of, and concerned about, these problems. Organized groups such as WWP are doing wonders to educate the public through information, litigation and media attention. Nearly every week news articles appear on the issue of public-lands livestock grazing.

Where once the permittees ruled public rangelands, they are now very worried. You'd think they would be smart enough to change their operations to restore and protect public resources, even if federal land managers don't have the guts to insist on compliance.

I guess they're hoping all of us will go away so they can perpetuate the status quo. If so, they won't realize their mistake until they have lost it all.

national level.

Full media kits are in the works. Budget permitting, a new WWP brochure will soon move from conception to production.

We have high hopes (and competitive bids) for a WWP documentary designed to serve at least two purposes: fund-raising events and media conferences at Greenfire. Yet to come are field tours and watersheds workshops for reporters; surveys and opinion polls for circulation to the media; and greater WWP presence at national conferences, including the annual SEJ convention.

It's been a busy two months. Whatever strides we've made, greater challenges remain.

"As the free press develops," Washington Post columnist Walter Lippmann once wrote, "the paramount point is whether the journalist, like the scientist or scholar, puts truth in the first place or in the second."

The homogenization of American society breeds complacency in much of the free press. In the not-so-brave new world, Mencken's mandate has new urgency. Our job is to ensure that it is heard.

Keith Raether, director of media and public information for WWP, comes to the organization from the Environmental News Network in Ketchum, Idaho, where he served as news director for the Internet-based news service. A journalist for 27 years, Raerber worked as a columnist and features writer for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, as arts editor and columnist for the (Denver) Rocky Mountain News and the Albuquerque Tribune, and as a copy editor on the desk of Upstream International in Oslo, Norway.

Grants & Gifts

WWP continues to expand its network of support through the efforts of **Judy Hall**, director of fund development, and other WWP staff and directors. In late May, WWP received a grant of \$6,000 from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation in Maine to help cover costs for upgraded computers. The Peradam Foundation in California followed suit in July, awarding us \$8,500 for general support. In a letter announcing the grant, Peradam director **Robert Spertus** noted that WWP "has been at the forefront of the growing movement to challenge the ranching industry and recover public control of public lands in the western states." Our thanks to both foundations for their endorsement of our work.

We owe special thanks to **Gordon Younger** who, among his many contributions to WWP, donated a 1996 Ford Explorer to our cause. The four-wheel-drive SUV is being used by **Stew Churchwell**, our central Idaho director and Greenfire manager, and by WWP field monitors.

Thanks also to **Larry Walker**, creator of the RangeNet website (<http://www.RangeNet.org>), for administering it as a special project of WWP.

Finally, hats off to **Faus Geiger** for three years of unswerving service to WWP as director of administration and editor of our newsletter. Faus left WWP this spring to work on her family's homestead in Camas County. **Barbara Hakala**, a longtime Wood River valley resident who makes her home in Triumph, is WWP's new director of administration. Barbara will coordinate and oversee all office operations. Media director Keith Raether will assemble and edit the WWP newsletter.

Word to the Wise

"The rancher (with a few honorable exceptions) is a man who strings barbed wire all over the range; drills wells and bulldozes stock ponds; drives off elk and antelope and bighorn sheep; poisons coyotes and prairie dogs; shoots eagles, bears and cougars on sight; supplants the native grasses with tumbleweed, snakeweed, poverty weed, cowshit, anthills, mud, dust, and flies. And then heads back and grins at the TV cameras and talks about how much he loves the American West."

Edward Abbey

Calendar

Greenfire Revival - WWP's inaugural Greenfire Revival is slated for Sept. 14-16 at our preserve on the East Fork of the Salmon River in central Idaho. Camp, dream, dance, learn birdsongs, discuss books and see watersheds restoration in action on the Greenfire Preserve. See News in Brief (p. 3) for details and registration.

Desert Conference - The 23rd annual High Desert Conference, sponsored by the Oregon Natural Desert Association, will be held Sept. 27-30 at Malheur Field Station near Burns, Oregon. Visit with old and new friends, recite a poem at the Desert Rat Poetry Festival and greet migrating birds as they make their way south. For a conference agenda and more information, contact Daniele McKay at (541) 330-2638 or dmckayQonda.org.

"RangeNet 2001: A Grazing Odyssey" - RangeNet's second annual conference, slated for Nov. 10-11 at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, will look at the adverse impacts of grazing by domestic livestock on public lands and at campaigns and other actions to end these impacts.

Speakers already confirmed for the conference include WWP's **Jon Marvel**, author **George Wuertner**, conference organizer **Jim Powers** and spotted-owl champion **Andy Kerr**. Topics range from "Welfare Ranching" to "Grazing Permit Retirement" to "Getting Your Voice Heard in Washington."

For more information, visit the RangeNet website at <http://www.rangenet.org/m2001>. This year's conference is free, but space is limited. Tax-deductible contributions for next year's conference are appreciated. To register for RangeNet 2001 and donate to RangeNet 2002, please fill out the registration form below and mail it to: Western Watersheds Project, P.O. Box 1770, Hailey, ID 83333.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip code: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Tax deductible contribution toward costs for RangeNet 2002:

_____ None. Just register me for RangeNet 2001.

_____ \$ 25 _____ \$ 50 _____ \$100

_____ Other (please specify amount) \$ _____

Credit cards are accepted. Make checks payable to: WWP-RangeNet 2001.



Watersheds Messenger

Editor: Keith Raether

Watersheds Messenger is published periodically for members, friends and supporters of Western Watersheds Project. Changes of address, renewals, new subscriptions, undelivered copies and ideas for articles should be sent to WWP, P.O. Box 1770, Hailey, Idaho 83333. Phone: (208) 788-2290. Fax: (208) 788-2298. Please note our new e-mail address: wwp@westernwatersheds.org and web site: www.westernwatersheds.org.

Mission Statement

Working to protect and restore Western watersheds through educational outreach, public policy initiatives, litigation and by ending incompatible uses of public lands.

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Volunteers Needed

... to help with events, membership drives and office help. Call Barbara at 788-2290 if you would like to organize the volunteer committee or be a volunteer.

Please Join Us or Renew Your Membership Now

YES, I want to renew my membership in Western Watersheds Project to help protect and restore all western watersheds.

Enclosed is my tax deductible annual membership:

Living Lightly: \$20.00	Individual: \$25.00	Family: \$35.00	Sponsor: \$500.00
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