Western Watersheds, NPLGC Go to Washington
By Gilly Lyons

As so many historic events do, it all started with a meeting at the Watergate. On a rainy but mild Sunday in mid-September, nine public lands activists gathered in an apartment at the once-notorious complex along the Potomac River.

We came without duct tape, but with enough olives, cheese, water crackers, red-pepper hummus, beer, wine and Milano cookies to see us through an afternoon of strategy, planning and preparation for the week ahead.

This Foggy Bottom confab constituted Day One of the National Public Lands Grazing Campaign’s inaugural Autumn Stampede, a week of grassroots advocacy focused on the halls of Congress and their denizens.

Our group included Andy Kerr, director of the NPLGC; Mark Salvo (on loan from American Lands Alliance) and yours truly (on loan from Oregon Natural Desert Association), also with the NPLGC; Keith Raether, media director with Western Watersheds Project and coordinator of NPLGC’s public information effort; Katie Fite, director of the Committee for the High Desert (formerly Committee for Idaho’s High Desert); and four representatives of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness: Libby Ingalls (president), Wendy Mimiaga, Connie Kay and Maureen Kielty.

The goal of the Stampede was three-fold:

- Talk with members of Congress and their staffs about the ecological devastation wrought by domestic livestock grazing on publicly-owned lands in the arid West;
- Share with the same congressional members and staffs NPLGC’s voluntary buyout proposal for federal grazing permittees as a fundamental way to reverse this devastation;
- Hand-deliver copies of George Wuerthner and Mollie Matteson’s new book, “Welfare Ranching: The Subsidized Destruction of the American West,” to as many House and Senate offices as time and upper-body strength would allow. (As devoted readers of the Watersheds Messenger already know, “Welfare Ranching” is a 7-pound, 348-page, richly photographed indictment of the federal grazing program.)

Katie Fite, director of the Committee for the High Desert, presented Idaho Sen. Larry Craig with a copy of "Welfare Ranching" at a breakfast in the senator’s office.
We nine Stampederes represented a fair chunk of the western states, where livestock grazing is most ubiquitous and pervasive: California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico and Oregon. With a day of orientation and planning behind us, we were eager to set out on the great Stampede, a week of meetings with the delegations of cattle-grazed western states.

I also set up meetings with key decision-makers at the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service.

Each of the Stampede days adhered to a relatively consistent schedule: We gathered at a Capitol Hill coffeehouse at what some thought to be an ungodly hour. (It may have even been as early as 8:30 a.m., but then, Washington goes to work late.) We fueled up on assorted caffeinated beverages supplemented by baked goods of questionable nutritional value, reviewed the day’s meetings and strategies, and packed all kinds of materials into all manner of carrying cases.

Watches synchronized, we set out on our respective morning rounds of meetings with stacks of “Welfare Ranching” in hand.

At lunchtime we regrouped to restock our individual supplies of “Welfare Ranching.” Then we went forth to our afternoon meetings. Same game plan, same resources.

At 5:30 p.m. we met at the Wayburn Wilderness House near the Capitol for a daily debriefing session. (Many thanks to the folks at WWH for allowing us to use their conference room.) Notes from the various meetings were shared and compared, issues raised, follow-up actions proposed and logged. An hour or two later, feeling spent if not somewhat woozy from lots of meetings and sundry twists and turns. Little did we know, for example, that many senators host weekly breakfasts for their visiting constituents.

This revelation afforded us a brilliant opportunity to personally deliver copies of “Welfare Ranching” to several Senate and House members. Katie attended a breakfast with Larry Craig (R-Idaho), Keith and Connie with Max Baucus (D-Montana), Mark with Gordon Smith (R-Oregon). The complimentary breakfasts also allowed some of us to vary our morning routine by eating different baked goods of questionable nutritional value - at no cost to the campaign.

Another Stampede moment to remember came at a constituents’ reception hosted by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-California). During the reception, Boxer read from a list of names and affiliations of the Californians in attendance, one of whom happened to be Libby. Boxer’s announcement that a Great Old Broad was in the house met with a near standing ovation from the crowd of about 100.

The brightest highlight of Stampede Week arrived like a lightning bolt on the final day of our effort. Late in the afternoon we received a firm commitment from a highly respected member of the House of Representatives to introduce voluntary permit retirement legislation in the 108th Congress.

This congressman (whose name can’t be revealed until he and his staff have the opportunity to further develop legislative language and strategy) is passionate about protecting public lands and equally passionate about finding a permanent solution to the current grazing calamity -- a solution that benefits taxpayers, livestock operators and the myriad plants and animals that rely on western wildlands.

Voluntary grazing permit retirement is such a solution, and we’re honored to have the chance to work with this lawmaker as he prepares to introduce a bill in early 2003.

WWP and NPLGC’s first crack at a grassroots lobbying effort was a resounding success. With an urgent issue to advance and an indispensable reference – “Welfare Ranching” - - to back it up, nine activists were able to open many eyes in the nation’s capital to the daily damage visited by domestic livestock upon America’s public lands.
Grazing Subsidy:  
$500 Million or More a Year

Americans may be paying nearly $1 billion annually in taxes to subsidize cattle grazing on federal public lands across the West, a new study shows.

In “Assessing the Full Cost of the Federal Grazing Program,” Rockefeller Fellow Karyn Moskowitz and Bureau of Land Management economist Chuck Romaniello document the vast subsidies that support livestock grazing on public lands by 23,600 federal permittees in the western United States.

“Taking into account the many direct and indirect federal expenditures that benefit or compensate for impacts of livestock grazing on federal lands, the full cost of the federal grazing program to the U.S. Treasury is likely to approximate $500 million annually,” Moskowitz and Romaniello note in their report. “Considering the many other indirect costs . . . due to resource damage and impaired opportunities for recreation and other non-commercial land uses, the full cost to the U.S. public could approach $1 billion annually.”

The study was commissioned by the Center for Biological Diversity in conjunction with Western Watersheds Project and other conservation groups representing the National Public Lands Grazing Campaign.

Romaniello, an agricultural economist for the BLM in Colorado, said range management programs administered by the BLM and U.S. Forest Service are “just the tip of the iceberg.”

“Numerous programs both in and outside the two agencies also bear costs related to the grazing program,” he said.

Among these costs are compensation or mitigation for damages to public resources, wildlife, watersheds and human health by livestock on public lands.

The NPLGC groups commissioned the study to get an objective, updated summary of the costs to the public -- and harm to the environment -- of the federal livestock grazing program.

The NPLGC seeks to end the federal subsidy system through a federal buyout program that would compensate ranchers who voluntarily relinquish their public lands grazing permits. The plan is endorsed by more than 120 groups nationwide and supported by many ranchers.

The NPLGC proposal would compensate federal grazing permittees at $175 per animal unit month, or AUM, a rate four times market value. Public lands ranching west of the Mississippi River produces less than 3 percent of America’s beef.

Sen. Barbara Boxer’s announcement that a Great Old Broad for Wilderness (Libby Ingalls, left) was in the house met with a roar from the crowd of about 100.

Equally important, the Stampede set in motion what we believe will be workable, innovative legislation that creates options for ranchers and a future for imperiled species and western landscapes.

Oh, and the Ethiopian food was pretty darn delicious, too.

Gilly Lyons, eastern representative for NPLGC, lives in Washington, D.C.

Editor’s note: NPLGC will embark on a second Stampede sometime after the 108th Congress convenes in 2003. To learn more about participating in, or contributing to, the next Stampede -- and to find out which senators provide the best baked goods -- please contact NPLGC at glyons@onda.org or (202) 547-9267.

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The Greenfire Games

They came. They competed. One conquered. At the second annual Greenfire Revival in October, Western Watersheds Project staff, board members and guests competed in their own version of the Olympic Games at WWP's Greenfire Preserve on the East Fork of the Salmon River. Field events included Cowpie Shuffleboard (sliding cowpies across a surface decorated with images of politicians who pander to livestock interests); Victory Toss (throwing a ball at targets representing various defendants -- Idaho Land Board, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service -- in WWP’s legal victories); and Dart the Damage (tossing darts at a board dotted with victims of livestock damage, including riparian areas, birds and taxpayers).

WWP board member Debra Ellers ran circles around the competition, winning both scored rounds. In the practice rounds, Sinapu director John Graham of Colorado scored two impressive 100-point hits in the Victory Toss, achieving a buyout of public lands grazing permits. This is a positive omen for next year’s RangeNet conference, since John will be hosting the conference in Boulder, Colo.

Thanks to WWP member Dale Grooms for his ingenuity and industry in designing the games.

Ed sees us as “a suburban audience intent on suburbanizing the West,” part of a larger effort to “push people off the land,” an effort with elements of class warfare. I see a diverse group of people, many from small Western towns themselves, who belong to a growing Western rural culture that has nothing to do with cows.

For instance, 49 percent of the total income in Lemhi County, Idaho, where I live, comes from pensions, investments and government transfer payments.

Jon pointed out that subdivisions happen when ranchers choose to sell, and many ranchers choose to sell when the price is right. The way to prevent development of private land is through land-use planning and the purchase of development rights, not by keeping private cows on hundreds of millions of acres of land that belongs to the American public.

Ed worries (rightly) about coal-bed methane development, which threatens to engulf his adopted home town of Paonia, Colorado. He also notes (correctly) that “lawless” federal agencies have been no help at all in combating that threat.

To fight off the methane carpetbaggers from Florida, environmentalists have joined with ranchers, Ed said. Compared to that threat, “a couple of bucks an AUM is no big deal.” So he doesn’t see the point of antagonizing ranchers. “Why piss them off?” he asked.

“Because,” Jon replied, “they have no land ethic. It’s that simple.”

Ed and Jon seemed to agree that in the arid lands of the West, ranching is not an economically viable activity. But Ed feels that it should continue for political and sociological reasons, while Jon is unwilling to overlook the widespread damage that cattle continue to cause.

Ed Marston

The RangeNet 2002 conference, presented last month in Boise by Western Watersheds Project, was a wonderful chance for my husband and me to see some familiar faces and meet others who until now had been just admired names: Andy Kerr, George Wuerthner and Dr. Elizabeth Painter among many. Bob brought along a copy of George’s compelling new book, “Welfare Ranching: The Subsidized Destruction of the American West” to be signed by the author.

After a trip over the mountains through the incredible fall colors between Idaho City and Lowman, we pulled into Boise just in time to catch the debate between Ed Marston, publisher of High Country News, and Jon Marvel, executive director of Western Watersheds Project.

I admit to a soft spot in my heart for Ed. Back in the early 1990s, Ed’s wife, Betsy, then the paper’s editor, essentially taught me how to write the taut, focused essays that are HCN’s specialty. Best of all, she convinced me that the stories I had to tell about life in the West were worth telling.

The debate in the Student Union building at Boise State University was lively and entertaining, as both Jon and Ed are terrific storytellers and advocates for their points of view.

While Ed admits that ranchers must change or “destroy themselves,” he sees creeping suburbanization as the greater threat. Jon, on the other hand, asks why the land and water and wildlife of the West must continue to suffer while we wait for the future to roll over the people that Wallace Stegner called “the lords of yesterday.”

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RangeNet 2002,
Or Ma and Pa Kettle in the Big City
by Louise Wagenknecht

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So what's the solution? Public lands ranchers are a minority of a minority. Four out of five Western ranchers don't have grazing permits, yet we subsidize the one-fifth who do at tremendous cost to our water, soil, fish and wildlife.

Andy Kerr and Mark Salvo, speaking next about the National Public Lands Grazing Coalition's permit buyout proposal, presented a solution.

Ranching is a dying industry. But will it die soon enough to prevent the extinction of bull trout, sage grouse, the Chiricahua leopard frog, the Sonoran pronghorn? A voluntary buyout of grazing permits is a collaborative solution which recognizes that grazing permits have a private investment.

The West's 27,000 public lands permittees received a letter from the NPLGC this spring, describing the buyout proposal. Since then, many have written or phoned to say they're “on the ropes.” They're growing old. They aren't making money. Their kids have left the ranch. Their return on investment is 1 percent to 3 percent -- in a good year. They go to more and more meetings with federal officials, who are being forced to pay attention to cattle damage.

Ironically, because they are already losing money, the nearly 50 percent of public lands ranchers who actually try to make a living from their operations literally can't afford to manage their livestock any better than they are doing now, nor can they afford to have their grazing cut. NPLGC's proposal would accelerate and smooth the inevitable transition.

But leaders of state cattlemen's associations have more to lose if the system ends. Already, the buyout idea has created tension between industry leadership and some of its members. Paying $175 per AUM -- four times market value -- for permits would make it harder for the leaders to buy out their neighbors. One state cattle association president, however, tells NPLGC that two-thirds of his members would jump at a buyout.

Where are the West's politicians on this? They understand that the West is the nation's most urbanized region. They want to protect their rancher allies, but they know ranchers are less and less relevant. So when environmentalists and ranchers show up wanting the same thing, that thing becomes politically powerful. At that point, money can appear.

NPLGC proposes to use a market to end a market. Buyout money could get ranchers clean with the banks, which are carrying many undercollateralized loans. Ranchers could buy more private land to raise their economy of scale. As a tool to remove livestock from public lands, a buyout is socially just and pragmatic. And it's voluntary.

The conference adjourned, but not all of the assembly parted company. Bob and I and many others headed from Boise to WWP's Greenfire Preserve on the East Fork of the Salmon River for the second annual Greenfire Revival.

The nights at Greenfire were clear and very cold. The temperature dropped to 11 degrees. But the days were sunny and warm, creating the perfect atmosphere for hiking, sightseeing, wildlife watching, field botany and visiting.

There were hikes to Railroad Ridge with its spectacular view, walks up the mile of the East Fork of the Salmon River that flows through the preserve, and time to relax on the deck in the autumn sunshine.

Ma and Pa Kettle went home to the Lemhi Valley with a renewed sense that our goals are attainable, even if the way to them won't be quick or easy.

Louise Wagenknecht, a WWP board member, lives in Leadore, Idaho.
Steens Mountain: Wilderness, But Not Cow-Free
by Debra Ellers

Barbed-wire fences encapsulate the wrongs of public land grazing.
Fences entangle and kill wildlife, and block them from migration routes and waterholes. Often funded by taxpayers, these fences exist to benefit private extractive interests. Bleak, manmade slashes mar the open, vast landscapes of public lands in the West.

This grim picture made me all the more eager to pitch in on a volunteer project to remove an infestation of barbed-wire fences in the Steens Mountain Wilderness in remote southeastern Oregon. I felt that ripping out fences with my own hands so that pronghorn, deer and elk could once again roam unencumbered would make a real, immediate difference for the land and the wild creatures who call it home.

A bonus of the trip was putting out of my mind the daily scandals of executive plunder at Enron, WorldCom, Tyco and Global Crossing. But as I would soon discover, escaping corporate greed isn’t easy even in the Oregon backcountry, thousands of miles from financial centers.

A Century of Overgrazing

Oregon’s newest wilderness area is a unique, glaciated fault-block mountain rising to 9,700 feet in the high desert of southeastern Oregon. A land of contrasts, Steens Mountain’s rolling hills are blanketed with aspens, sagebrush and grasses, and punctuated by glacial gorges such as Big Indian and Kiger that present majestic vistas.

Its fragile alpine and sub-alpine areas host native plants such as bunchgrasses, aspens and lupines, as well as wildlife including pronghorn, bighorn sheep, raptors and elk. The high summit of Steens captures passing moisture, generating the Donner und Blitzen River -- designated a Wild and Scenic River -- and several creeks that are home to threatened redband trout.

European immigrants in the 1800s exploited the then-bountiful water and grasses by cramming hundreds of thousands of domestic livestock onto the higher reaches of the mountain. Overgrazing plagued Steens throughout the 20th century.

Wilderness Protection at Last

Recognizing the special beauty of the area, conservationists sought for many years to protect it. A successful lawsuit in 1994 by the Oregon Natural Desert Association and the National Wildlife Federation removed livestock from the Donner und Blitzen River. Protection efforts culminated in the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act (SMA), which Congress passed in October 2000.

Key features of the SMA include:

- Designation of nearly 170,000 acres as wilderness, 97,000 acres of which are livestock-free, and retirement of grazing permits associated with those lands;
- Acquisition of 18,446 acres of private in-holdings in return for U.S. Treasury payments totaling $5,157,000 to five private landowners who also received 104,236 acres of BLM lands elsewhere as part of the exchange;
- Designation of Ankle Creek and Mud Creek, tributaries of the Donner und Blitzen River, as Wild and Scenic rivers;
- Establishment of the Redband Trout Preserve, which includes portions of the Donner und Blitzen River, Ankle Creek and Mud Creek, to protect this threatened species of high-desert fish.

As part of the BLM’s efforts to restore wilderness qualities to the designated “cow-free” areas, a nonprofit service organization, Wilderness Volunteers, assigned our group of 10 to Ankle Creek. We would backpack into the area, set up a base camp by the newly designated wild and scenic river and spend four days ripping out barbed-wire fences that were no longer needed in a “cow-free” area.

“Cow-Free” or Cows O’Plenty?

After a tough, 6-mile hike with packs on old four-wheel drive roads, our group faced an unsettling reality all around Ankle Creek: What was touted as “cow-free” was severely and recently “cow-nuked.” Cattle manure was everywhere, including our campsite. Grasses were chewed to less than an inch, and down to bare ground along Ankle Creek.

James Ellers with remnants and remains of grazing.

Photo © Debra Ellers
Cattle had trampled the stream and the springs forming its headwaters. Young willows and aspens had been eaten, leaving a dusty, barren understory in the mature aspen and willow communities. As disconcerting as the damage was, a more disturbing realization crept in. As the week progressed, we found a biological wasteland: few birds or butterflies, no deer, no elk, no pronghorn. With no forage or cover, the wildlife had mostly disappeared.

I felt the anguish of this high-desert land and its wildlife, invaded by alien Eurasian cattle that have dominated the land for more than a century. Our project, I hoped, was the start of a healing process. With every strand of barbed wire coiled up and every fence post pulled out, I envisioned the land sighing relief.

Our hardworking group removed -- completely by our own muscle power -- about 2.5 miles of barbed-wire fencing from the riparian zone and uplands near the upper stretch of Ankle Creek. Seeing the piles of posts, rolls of barbed wire and a landscape turning from domesticated to wild again was indeed a tangible reward.

But what about the devastation to the land, its wildlife and plants? While the long recovery process desperately needs to begin, we found out, to our disbelief, that one more season of grazing is scheduled for Ankle Creek. Was it to give another homespun, salt-of-the-earth “steward of the land” another season to find other allotments for an ailing operation so that he won’t lose the fourth-generation homestead?

**Corporate Plunder Revisited**

No, we discovered, it was not Ma and Pa Rancher completely “utilizing” all available forage so that their marginal operation could squeak by. The devastation we experienced on these public lands -- designated wilderness and Wild and Scenic River, the highest of all legal protections -- was for the private benefit of an out-of-state corporation named Roaring Springs Ranch Inc. (RSR).

Headquartered west of the Cascades in Kalama, Wash., RSR is described in a 1999 Range magazine article as the owner of 425,000 acres in the Catlow Valley (near the western base of Steens). As part of the SMA, RSR received 76,374 acres of BLM land in exchange for ceding 10,909 acres to the agency. Besides the unwitting generosity of the American public in exchanging land at a 7:1 ratio in favor of RSR, taxpayers paid the corporation more than $2.8 million as part of the exchange.

Net result: Courtesy of American taxpayers, RSR ended up with substantially more private land, more cash for its coffers and a couple more seasons at the public trough for its livestock to devour our grasses, forbs, shrubs and trees. From the nearly complete annihilation of grasses, willows and aspens that I observed, it seemed clear that RSR is strip-mining the forage from the land in the Ankle and Mud Creek drainages as a last hurrah in its final seasons of permitted grazing.

Despite my desire to retreat to a simple world of hands-on work with wire cutters to restore the land from domestic livestock grazing, I couldn’t escape the Byzantine grazing regime that allows an uneconomical, extractive use of our public lands at untold costs to wildlife, streams and habitat. Nor did I escape the world of Enron, WorldCom and Tyco. Corporate greed is alive and exploiting the public resources of America, even in the remote reaches of southeastern Oregon.

What can you do to help? Contact the BLM, as we did about Steens, or wherever you witness atrocities to public lands. And join Wilderness Volunteers for another fence removal project in the Steens area this coming summer.

For information, visit [www.wildernessvolunteers.org](http://www.wildernessvolunteers.org)

Debra Ellers, a WWP board member, lives in Boise, Idaho.

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**Report From Wyoming:**

**Cowboy Mythology Dooms Economy**

by Mike Stark

Wyoming’s fascination with a Hollywood version of itself has pushed the state toward economic distress, an aging population and a drain on young people who leave to find work, a Sheridan author says.

The state hasn’t been able to shake the long-held idea that Wyoming is a rugged cowboy haven where riches will spill out of farming, ranching and mineral development, says author Samuel Western.

“This mythology broke us,” says Western, whose recently released book, “Pushed Off the Mountain, Sold Down the River: Wyoming’s Search for its Soul,” has already sold out. A second printing is scheduled.

Wyoming is the fastest aging state in the country. Only Teton County saw growth in school enrollment between 1990 and 2000. The birthrate is at an all-time low. University of Wyoming graduates are leaving the state in droves.

“Any university where 70 percent of graduates leave to find work is a system that needs to be discussed,” Western said.

Wyoming didn’t recover from the Depression until 1973, when the oil embargo drove up prices. But during the lean years between, when ranching and farming were supposed to be king, Wyoming’s economy continued its slump. Western says that when one governor took office in the 1960s, there was $80 in the state’s general fund.

“The more dependent on natural resources, the poorer we’re going to be on a local basis,” he says.

Western has been criticized at previous speeches for appearing to be anti-agriculture. He believes there is a place for farming and ranching in Wyoming, but they need to be viewed in real terms, not in some fictionalized ideal about what they should be or might be one day.

The economic realities of ranching and farming are not encouraging, he says. About two-thirds of the production of irrigated crops in Wyoming is hay, which has one of the lowest profit margins. And in Goshen County, which has some of the state’s most widespread agricultural production, there are more children living at the poverty level than anywhere else in the state. Western believes Wyoming needs to re-examine its perception of itself, accept a diversified economy and invest in education and infrastructure. And it needs new vision within its communities.

“It’s up to us, the people in this state, to take risks that are not related to natural resources,” Western says. “The best resources are the ones we have between our ears.”

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Wild Kingdom
by Stew Churchwell

Though the peregrine falcons seem to have moved on for the year, most of the summer wildlife at Greenfire remains. I still see Northern harriers and kestrels every day. I still watch coyotes combing the fields for their breakfast of voles.

As fall proceeds, wildlife sightings increase. Deer are returning. First there were two, then six. Recently I saw 10 on the east side of the East Fork.

A family of mergansers regularly fish in the river, just below the main house. At first, it’s puzzling to see a rooster tail of water shoot across the river. My initial thought is that the salmon are finally back. But I realize it’s a submersed, fish-chasing merganser when five fish leap out of the water all at once in a last-ditch effort to escape these effective predators.

Back in late August, while three of us sat on the deck watching the last light of the evening, we sighted a black bear on the east side of the river. The bruin ambled casually down the steep bank, looked around a bit, then climbed the bank again to walk upriver along the edge of the field.

Ursus americanus remained visible long enough for me to set up and focus the spotting scope for an close view enjoyed by all. I was thrilled with the sighting, especially since it was a first, but figured the bear was just passing through.

A week later, while looking for salmon in the river, a friend and I found a large, fresh, gooey pile of bear scat nearby. Again the following week, I returned to the river and found a fresh pile of scat close by. Both piles consisted almost entirely of processed rose hips.

Then, I noticed that my yellow labrador, Willow, was sniffing and chewing on something nearby. I investigated and discovered why I can’t seem to find any spawning salmon in the usual locations this year.

The spot occupied by Willow was cleared of vegetation. There lay two fairly large pieces of dried fish skin and a pectoral fin that almost certainly came from a large salmon. The bear apparently used this spot to pick apart and consume at least one chinook.

I thought about what the river that runs through Greenfire and all the wildlife connected to it might look like if salmon were to return in historic numbers.

The summer’s irrigation effort produced plentiful grasses with native vegetation has been signed. A companion agreement with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to plant trees and shrubs for a travel/migration corridor also has been finalized. Plants are reserved for spring planting, and there is a collective feeling of relief as the project is finally moving forward.

The Idaho Intermountain West Joint Venture Committee rated our upland restoration proposal the No. 1 project for Idaho. Then, all No. 1 state proposals were reviewed by a regional committee to determine the worthiest projects of the lot.

Last month I received notification that WWP has been awarded $35,569 to restore 60 acres of hay field with native upland vegetation. Yes!

Stew Churchwell is the Central Idaho Director and Greenfire Manager for WWP.

The Gift of Giving

Western Watersheds Project is no different from other conservation groups. As WWP expands its scope and efforts, our needs and responsibilities grow proportionally. Last spring WWP’s unique Greenfire Preserve was in sore need of exterior paint, so a volunteer crew of board members and supporters dedicated their Memorial Day holidays to the project. We deeply appreciate the time and effort of all those who helped.

We have various other needs -- and welcome benefactors who are willing to share or donate the cost of the following items:

- Camera adapter for spotting scope at Greenfire Preserve. The adapter would allow us to document species and populations of wildlife at the preserve for conservation grants and projects. Estimated cost: $350.
- Repairs to Greenfire vehicles. The vehicles are regularly used to haul equipment, supplies, and conservation goods, and to access grazing allotments for field monitoring.
- Replacement unit for the pantry refrigerator at Greenfire, where WWP events are regularly held and guests are housed. Maximum dimensions: 33”W x 67”H x 26 1/2”D.
- Replacement of furnishings and accessories at Greenfire. Included are living room chairs, outdoor tables and chairs, and bathroom sink faucets.

If you’re able to contribute to any of these items or assist in any of our volunteer projects -- or if you know someone who can -- please contact WWP Secretary-Treasurer Gene Bray in Boise at 208-888-3293 or gene@westernwatersheds.org.
Report From Utah: Appeals and Victories
by John Carter

Our efforts in Utah continue to produce positive results. Western Watersheds Project is collaborating with several local and regional environmental organizations in an effort to force the U.S. Forest Service to address the impacts of livestock on wildlife, watersheds and water quality.

Our current attention on national forests in Utah includes comments and appeals on livestock grazing permits, water developments for livestock, and prescribed fire or vegetation management projects that do not address the role of livestock in creating fire hazards and dysfunctional forests.

If forest supervisors are turning a blind eye to the livestock issue, the courts are not. WWP has won a number of recent appeals in Utah. They include:

**Squaw Creek Waterline**

This project would have developed a 6-mile pipeline and water developments for livestock in Ashley National Forest. The scheme would have dewatered a stream and caused more destruction to this steep, already damaged area adjacent to the Uinta Wilderness.

**Cache Aspen/Mountain Brush Treatments**

The plan here was to prescribe fire and timber harvest on 20,000 acres in the Logan and Ogden ranger districts to reverse the declining trend of aspen.

Aspen communities are second only to riparian areas in their importance to wildlife and benefit to water conservation. Livestock eat young aspen like kids devour licorice, causing a conversion to other vegetation types.

Our appeal, coordinated with the Utah Environmental Congress, succeeded in taking the project off the table. We’ve also discussed plans to meet with the appropriate forest supervisor and staff to address the aspen damage and the role of livestock in all the destruction.

**Bear Hodges Vegetation Project**

This project called for building roads and logging old-growth fir in northern Utah’s Bear River Range, which provides essential habitat for Bonneville cutthroat trout, Canada lynx and Northern goshawk. Our lawsuit (filed under Willow Creek Ecology) forced authorities to abandon the project. Logan Canyon Coalition and the Utah chapter of the Sierra Club were partners in the effort.

**West Fork Black’s Fork Grazing Permit**

I’ve surveyed many watersheds in the incredible Uinta Wilderness, setting up long-term monitoring stations at elevations up to 12,000 feet. Climbing steep valleys and covering watersheds comprising tens of thousands of acres of wilderness might be hard work, but the effort is paying dividends.

Our monitoring data caused the Forest Service to re-evaluate its analysis -- an analysis that would have left thousands of sheep to graze this sensitive basin. We collaborated with the High Uintas Preservation Council and Western Wildlife Conservancy to get people to public meetings and put pressure on the Forest Service to withdraw the project and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. Mission accomplished.

We’re working on similar efforts across Utah’s six national forests as well as Caribou-Targhee National Forest in Idaho. Dozens of projects are proposed that will affect millions of acres of public land.

Our surveys, comments, appeals and partnerships with other environmental organizations are setting the stage for legal action with even greater impact in the future.

John Carter is WWP’s director of Utah operations

**WWP Prevails Again Over Land Board**

Western Watersheds Project won its seventh consecutive court decision over the State Board of Land Commissioners in the conservation group’s efforts to protect and preserve public lands in Idaho.

In September state District Judge Duff McKee reversed the Land Board’s award of a grazing lease to rancher Chris Black for the Sam Noble Springs allotment in Owyhee County. The 680-acre parcel boasts the largest population of Columbia spotted frogs in southern Idaho.

The spotted frog is a priority candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Research conducted by Boise State University biologists points to livestock grazing as a principal cause for the decline of spotted frog populations and their habitat.

WWP first applied for the Sam Noble Springs lease in 1996. The Land Board refused to consider the group's application, but the decision was overturned by the Idaho Supreme Court in 1999.

WWP then asked the Land Board to reclassify the parcel for conservation purposes to better protect the spotted frogs. The group also committed to pay double the prevailing grazing lease rate.

The Idaho Constitution requires the Land Board, as trustee of public school and other endowment lands, to “carefully preserve” and oversee management of these lands in a way that will secure the “maximum, long-term financial return” for the endowments.

In practice, the Land Board has frequently used state lands to help prop up a long-suffering livestock industry, rejecting WWP’s offers to pay significantly more money for state leases.

On Sept. 11, 2001 the Land Board denied an appeal by WWP to reclassify the Sam Noble Springs allotment. The board, which comprises the five highest-ranking officials in state government, also rejected a request from WWP executive director Jon Marvel for a contested case hearing. WWP countered with an appeal.

The latest ruling allows WWP to present scientific evidence of the harmful impacts and excessive costs of livestock grazing, and to demonstrate the Land Board’s poor record in grazing management.

“While the Land Board may not want to learn the truth about the harmful effects of livestock grazing and negative returns grazing has earned for Idaho’s public schools, we now can force them to confront reality,” said WWP executive director Jon Marvel.
A Discouraging Word Is Heard on the Range
by Dan Whipple

One of the first efforts at conservation by the Clinton administration was to try to raise the cost of grazing cattle on federal land.

If you scratched your head at the time and said, “What the ... ?” you weren’t alone. Of all the environmental issues facing the nation, the habits of contented cattle munching on grass didn’t seem that compelling. Plus, trying to discuss the issue immediately bogged down in a hummock-field of acronyms: BLM, AUM and USFS, to name a few.

All Clinton was trying to do was raise grazing fees, which at the time were $1.35 per AUM. (An AUM is the amount of forage needed to sustain one cow and her calf, one horse, or five sheep or goats for a month.)

The Clinton people arrived with backgrounds consisting mostly of elevated positions in environmental organizations. They cited ranchers for sabotaging efforts to reintroduce wolves into the West, for killing off bald eagles, for threatening the survival of grizzly bears, for plinking defenseless prairie dogs with their .22s, for blocking wilderness legislation and for using their outsized political power in Congress to make a nuisance of themselves.

The Clintonites argued the ranchers were getting away with rangeland robbery with the cheap AUM deal. Grazing leases on private land, sold on the open market, right next door to federal lands, went for seven to 10 times the cost of a federal lease. It was a swindle, they said.

It was -- and is. Swindles are an America tradition, from Manhattan Island to Enron, and the ranchers reinforced the custom by swatting away grazing fee initiatives like so many annoying deer flies. (In 2002 grazing fees were increased by eight cents per AUM.)

How so? The eight states of the interior, rancher-friendly West have a total population of only 22.6 million people but account for 16 U.S. senators. California, with a population of 33.9 million, has two senators. Game and set to the friends of ranchers in the Senate.

It may well be time to re-examine cattle grazing on public lands because a lot is at stake. The 11 Western states account for 750 million acres -- 40 percent of the landmass of the lower 48 states. Almost half of it is owned by the federal government and managed by two agencies -- the aforementioned Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service (the BLM and USFS, respectively, of the alphabet soup).

Almost every acre of that land is leased for grazing. A lot of people think it ought to be used for other things.


The case for doing this is surprisingly strong. Only about 2 percent of U.S. cattle producers use western public lands. Despite the power of the cowboy myth, eliminating the beef produced by these ranchers would not make a dent in America’s meat supplies.

Eighty-nine percent of all the nation’s cattle producers are located east of the 100th meridian, which splits the Dakotas, Nebraska and Texas roughly down the middle, takes the western third of Kansas and lops off Oklahoma’s panhandle.

What could be done with public lands freed from grazing and 400,000 miles of fencing? Ideas abound, including one proposed some years ago that would allow buffalo to wander freely over the plains.

It’s not as far-fetched as you might think. In 1987, Frank and Deborah Popper, both at Rutgers University at the time, noted that Plains states were losing population to the point where many counties had declined to a density below what originally was defined as “the frontier” back in the mid-1800s.

Others would like to see the lands dedicated to wildlife in general, fish and watershed protection, low-impact recreation and wilderness.

Achieving such a change remains a daunting political task. In 1992, I sat in the Washington, D.C., office of Wyoming Sen. Malcolm Wallop, a Republican, of course. We discussed the issue of grazing reform. He was against it. Wallop was a rancher himself, if you count raising polo ponies as ranching.

Then he told me a strange thing. He said there was a movement that styled itself “Cattle-free in ’93,” urging the elimination of grazing from public lands.

At the time, I covered Western environmental issues every day, and I had never heard any legitimate environmental group call for the elimination of grazing on public lands. Western senators had a tradition of referring to any departure from the status quo as a “war on the West,” so I thought perhaps this “Cattle-free” business was just another rhetorical swipe in the long-running war of words.

Even when the greens took power in the Clinton administration, they didn’t broach the subject of a cattle-free West.

That was then, as they say. Daunting or not, the concept of reducing the harmful effects of grazing on public lands by eliminating it is alive and well, surviving the hapless efforts of Clinton’s crew.

Bill Marlett, executive director of the Oregon Natural Desert Association, writes, “The long-term good of ranching on public lands crumbles under the weight of honest observation ... livestock grazing on public lands is not sustainable, or desirable, in terms of its cost to the land or to the society.”

Chances are, this effort won’t go anywhere in the Bush administration. But administrations are not immortal.

Environmentalists have demonstrated tenacity in the past on issues they care passionately about. That’s why there are wolf packs in Yellowstone National Park, despite the nearly unanimous opposition of those 16 senators.

Maybe no Democrats will occupy Western congressional seats for a long time, but no more cattle on public lands may well be a bet with shorter odds.

Dance With a Cow, and the Cow Will Lead
By Louise Wagenknecht

In 1985, in mid-career, I went back to college. I wanted to be a range conservationist. At the time, I thought I was the only student who wanted to study range management so I could later have an excuse to chase cows on government time. Silly me. Even at granola-crunching, holistically groovy Humboldt State in Arcata, Calif., the range kids were in love with horses and cows.

During one spring break, I learned that this ambition knows no age limit when I sat in on an annual meeting of "permittees," people who graze cows or sheep on public lands. The keynote speaker grinned down at his audience: "I became a range conservationist because I really wanted to be a rancher, and since I couldn't buy into it or marry into it, this seemed like the next best thing."

The ranchers chuckled politely. I gaped at him over my steak. I'll be dipped, I thought. He's a romantic, too.

A few years later, after my husband and I had moved to a small Idaho town, the local ranger district welcomed a new district ranger. I wasn't surprised to see him alight in full cowboy regalia from a pickup truck towing a horse trailer, with a degree in range management and quite a few years of range experience under his large silver belt buckle.

I was a little startled to learn that he held grazing permits on both U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands. No one else I spoke to seemed conscious of any irony or possible conflict of interest. I mentioned it to the forest supervisor one day and was treated to the silent stare usually reserved for people who break wind in good restaurants.

Well, of course, stupid, I rebuked myself. He hired the man, after all. He must have known.

Incestuous relationships between commodity interests and federal employees are nothing new. It's almost inevitable in small Western communities where members of logging and ranching families work for federal agencies. They measure the grass, mark the timber, grade the roads, maintain the trails, keep the trucks running and fill out the forms. They know no age limit when I sat in on an annual meeting of "permittees," people who graze cows or sheep on public lands. The keynote speaker grinned down at his audience: "I became a range conservationist because I really wanted to be a rancher, and since I couldn't buy into it or marry into it, this seemed like the next best thing."

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Incestuous relationships between commodity interests and federal employees are nothing new. It's almost inevitable in small Western communities where members of logging and ranching families work for federal agencies. They measure the grass, mark the timber, grade the roads, maintain the trails, keep the trucks running and fill out the forms. They know where the bodies are buried and who isn't speaking to whom, and why. But they don't make the decisions.

The upper ranks of line officers, who do, are still dominated by foresters and range cons. Although private company foresters and Forest Service foresters may stand around at the Christmas party talking about timber sales, they don't go out and log together on weekends.

Range people have a harder time keeping their jobs separate from their hobbies. On summer evenings, some can be seen tossing a loop in the roping arena beside the same rancher whose cattle were in the wrong allotment the day before.

They buy and sell cattle and horses with the people they are assigned to regulate. They dress like cowboys, walk like cowboys, and talk like cowboys. They believe that the grasses of the West should be eaten by cows.

People whose sympathies are with the plants tend to become botanists.

The first range-management plan I wrote was for an allotment held by a permittee whom I had known 20 years. He had worked with my father and I had gone to school with his kids.

I flattered myself that the plan would improve conditions on some alpine meadows at the crest of the Siskiyou Mountains on California's northern border. But I had a definite sentimental interest in keeping alive his family's tradition of grazing cattle in the high country. Excluding cattle from even the most fragile portions of the allotment never crossed my mind. I ignored the concerns of the district's wildlife biologist about black bear habitat.

One day I saw an anti-cow diatribe by writer Edward Abbey tacked to a bulletin board in the district office. I stopped to read it. Soon I was literally shaking with anger. Abbey would be content, it appeared, with nothing less than the removal of all cattle from the public lands.

Who was Abbey to tell ranchers they shouldn't be doing what they had done for a hundred years? More to the point, who was Abbey to tell me that the greatest joy of my life -- looking for cattle in the mountains on the back of a good horse -- was wrong? I fumed for days.

Abbey seemed like a direct threat to my way of life. I had carved out a niche among a few of the small ranchers in the Siskiyous. I hadn't married it or inherited it: I had earned it. My time and the sweat, hide and shoes of my horses spent rounding up cattle in mountain meadows had bought me entry into the cattle culture. Who was Abbey to threaten something so harmless, so enjoyable?

Eventually, my search for full-time range work took me out of California to the Southwest and Great Basin, where I saw at last what Abbey meant. All the wishing in the world won't make 8 inches of precipitation a year in these high, cold deserts equal the 50 inches that fall on the Siskiyou. Yet the Great American Desert is more heavily stocked, its soils more trampled, its riparian species more threatened.

While I was slowly, painfully, learning this, one of my grandmother's sayings began replaying in my mind. "You dance with them what brung you," she used to say. So when the cow culture brings range cons into the field, they inevitably follow the culture's agenda and not the agenda of the soil, or the water, or the wildlife.

If you try to dance with a cow, the cow will lead, even when you no longer want to follow.

Louise Wagenknecht, a WWP board member, lives in Leadore, Idaho.
WWP, Partners Sue BLM for Violation of Clean Water Act

Western Watersheds Project, Forest Guardians and the Committee for the High Desert (formerly the Committee for Idaho’s High Desert) have sued the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, alleging the agency violated the Clean Water Act by allowing livestock grazing to pollute streams and wetlands in Nevada.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Reno just days after the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, claims the BLM has permitted cattle to foul the waters of several tributaries of the Humboldt River, despite monitoring that shows gross violation of state water quality standards.

The lawsuit aims to halt cattle grazing along polluted streams and springs within the 536,000-acre Carico Lake Allotment, one of the largest in the western United States, and to demonstrate that livestock grazing that pollutes streams is illegal.

“If we want healthy, functioning streams that produce clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational values, then we must eliminate livestock grazing, especially along degraded streams, as is the case throughout the Carico Lake Allotment,” said John Horning, executive director of Forest Guardians.

In May 2000 the BLM released a report on the Carico Lake Allotment which overwhelmingly concluded that cattle in and around streams, rivers and springs directly caused water quality violations for temperature, fecal coliform (due to excretion directly into the water), turbidity and sedimentation (due to streambank trampling by cattle). Since the report was published, the agency has done nothing to correct these violations.

“With this lawsuit, we aim to hold all public land ranchers accountable for violations of the Clean Water Act and to finally assert that any grazing that causes or contributes to water pollution is illegal,” said Jon Marvel, executive director of Western Watersheds Project, underscoring the scope of the lawsuit.

Cattle are notorious for polluting streams, springs and rivers. They routinely congregate in large numbers around rare and fragile water sources, stripping away vegetation and trampling streambanks.

Livestock grazing on the Carico Lake Allotment is also damaging the habitat of sensitive wildlife species such as the Western sage grouse and Northern goshawk.
The observation came from Rep. Edwin Markey (D-Massachusetts). The forum was a panel discussion on “Politics and Environmental Policy” at the Society of Environmental Journalists Conference in Baltimore.

Markey was trying to digest lunch while listening to James Connaughton, chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Connaughton was dishing out Hungry Man helpings of the environmental stewardship of the Bush administration. It was tough chow to swallow.

When Connaughton had finished championing Dubya, Markey picked up with Teddy Roosevelt. It was Roosevelt, of course, who reminded Americans in 1901 of the simple adage, “Speak softly and carry a big stick.” What many don’t remember is Roosevelt’s frail health. He suffered from asthma, among many afflictions.

If Roosevelt were alive today, Markey said, he’d find more than 17 million Americans in the same condition, much of it the result of air pollution.

“The current administration’s motto on air quality,” Markey said, “is to regulate softly and carry a big inhaler.” Then he reeled off several statistics to prove his point.

SEJ’s 12th annual conference, a four-day confab of journalists, media directors and policy representatives set in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor, covered the waterfront of environmental issues. The “Politics and Policy” panel stirred some of the liveliest debate.

When Connaughton tried to characterize Vice President Dick Cheney as a friend of the environment because “he loves the outdoors,” League of Conservation Voters president Debra Callahan politely reeled. She proceeded to set the record straight, using LCV’s National Environment Scorecard as objective proof. In 12 years in Congress, Cheney laid a goose egg on green issues. His rating: 0 percent.

When Connaughton attempted to paint the environment into regional political corners, Markey reached for the gesso and started over with a blank canvas. Texas Democrats, he demonstrated, have consistently supported environmental initiatives while Texas Republicans have been out to pasture or opposed.

Callahan struck a major chord with conferees when she moved the discussion to the issue of environmental values and implored journalists to approach their work with a sense of conscience. Journalists who cover the environment are, in effect, advocates of the environment by virtue of the beat they cover. Thus, Callahan reasoned, it is imperative that they take on tough stories and get them right by finding the larger right in them.

The Baltimore conference seemed to attract as many academicians and public policy representatives as journalists, given the proximity to Washington, D.C. In the wake of 9/11, some reporters have been temporarily reassigned to an indignation known as the “war beat” and were absent from the conference.

I participated as public information coordinator of the National Public Lands Grazing Committee, of which Western Watersheds Project is a steering committee member. The timing of the conference was ideal. A month earlier, a group of us had been in Washington, D.C., on a successful campaign to stir support for federal legislation that would end livestock grazing on public lands through a voluntary buyout program for ranchers.

The NPLGC display table at SEJ afforded excellent exposure and put us in good company. Next door was Save Our Wild Salmon. Nearby were Pew, Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, American Rivers, the Humane Society and the Trust for Public Land.

We brought 17 boxes of “Welfare Ranching: The Subsidized Destruction of the American West,” to the conference. In three days, all 102 books were distributed.

The Fund for Animals and Buffalo Field Campaign were so impressed with George Wuerthner and Mollie Matteson’s book that they kept display copies on their tables and directed conferees to ours.

I also presented the NPLGC campaign, with “Welfare Ranching” as an 11-by-14 inch visual aid, at a breakfast session during the conference. Interest in the public lands issue was keen. Questions from reporters and representatives of other conservation groups were thoughtful and fair.

I only wish Debra Callahan had been at the breakfast. Environmental values shaped the discussion. There wasn’t an ounce of ground chuck to be found on anyone’s plate.

Keith Raether is WWP’s director of media and public information.

Calender of Coming Events

WWP Board Meeting

The board of directors of Western Watersheds Project will hold a general policy meeting and the 2003 budget adoption meeting November 23-24 at WWP’s Greenfire Preserve. Members are invited to attend. Please call the Hailey office (208)788-2290 before November 23 or thereafter the Greenfire Preserve (208)838-2374 for a more precise schedule of the board meeting.

“There is just one hope of repulsing the tyrannical ambition of civilization to conquer every niche on the whole earth. That hope is the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of the wilderness.”

-Bob Marshall
Gifts, Grants and Thanks

There is good news to report on the funding front. Since our Summer newsletter, Western Watersheds Project received a grant of $35,500 from the Intermountain West Joint Venture Project for an upland restoration project at WWP’s Greenfire Preserve.

The joint-venture program promotes restoration and maintenance of all bird populations, and fosters protection, restoration and enhancement of wetlands, riparian habitats and uplands in the intermountain West.

As part of our upland restoration program at Greenfire, WWP also received more than $14,000 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. WWP central Idaho director and Greenfire manager Stew Churchwell worked long and hard to secure both grants.

Fund development director Judy Hall also confirmed grants of $8,500 from the Peradam Foundation and $20,000 from the Foundation for Deep Ecology. Both contributions are for general support of WWP.

WWP extends a special note of gratitude to Josephine Clark of Balmoral, Maryland, for her longstanding support of Willow Creek Ecology in Utah, which recently merged with WWP under the direction of Utah director John Carter.

Over the years, Josephine has donated some $25,000 to WCE and supported several other conservation organizations. She worked for the General Accounting Office in Washington, D.C. Our heartfelt thanks for her abiding support and generous contributions to the conservation cause.

The charitable-giving season in the workplace is upon us. Are you a State of Idaho employee? To support WWP, please remember to designate code #41616 on your Charitable Giving Campaign pledge form, and spread the word to family, friends and neighbors who work for the state.

WWP extends thanks special thanks to the following WWP supporters, each of whom contributed $100 or more to our efforts during the previous quarter.

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Royce Ward

Making a Bequest to Western Watersheds Project
by Judy Hall

Western Watersheds Project has long been a beneficiary of contributions of individuals with vision and dedication to our cause. It is our hope that bequests will add to the support of wilderness, watersheds and the plants and wildlife that call them home.

After you have provided for the security of loved ones, and have considered the full range of philanthropic commitments, we respectfully ask that you consider how WWP might fit into your estate plans.

There are various ways to structure a bequest to WWP. Among these options are:

- A Specific Bequest, in which you give WWP a specified dollar amount or specified assets, such as securities, real estate, or tangible personal property.
- A Residual Bequest, in which you give WWP all or a percentage of the remainder of your estate after specific amounts bequeathed to other beneficiaries are distributed and estate-related expenses are paid.
- A Contingent Bequest, which provides for WWP upon the occurrence of a certain event -- if, for example your primary beneficiary does not survive you.
- A Testamentary Trust, in which you establish a trust through your will, and beneficiaries receive income for life or a term of years, and, at the end of the trust term, WWP receives the remainder.

Assets

You can bequeath various types of assets to WWP, including:

- Cash or securities
- Retirement assets (from an IRA, 401(k), 403(b), Keogh, tax-sheltered annuity, qualified pension or profit-sharing plan)
- Life insurance policies
- Interests in real estate (such as a residence)
- Tangible personal property (such as works of art or antiques)

When leaving retirement assets and life insurance policies to WWP, you must designate WWP as a beneficiary with your plan/policy administrator.

WWP fully intends to remain in existence as long as there are western watersheds to protect and restore. In the unlikely event that WWP dissolves, the organization is required by law to convey its assets to another nonprofit group. WWP will choose an organization whose mission most closely resembles our own. If your bequest consists of interests in real estate or tangible personal property, we strongly encourage you to discuss your gift with WWP during your lifetime to ensure that your wishes and objectives can be fulfilled. If you choose, WWP will assist your attorney or financial adviser in drafting a bequest.

A bequest to WWP is deductible for federal estate tax purposes, and there is no limit on the amount of the charitable deduction. In addition, bequests generally are not subject to state inheritance or estate taxes.

A bequest to WWP can be made by creating a new will, adding a codicil to your existing will, or naming WWP as a beneficiary of a retirement plan, life insurance policy, or revocable trust. If you are interested in exploring one of these options, please call us at (208)788-2290.
Yes!

I want my membership in Western Watersheds Project to help protect and restore all western watersheds! Enclosed is my tax-deductible annual membership.

Name: ____________________________________________
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Card Number: ___________________________
Expiration Date: ______________ Signature: __________________________

Remit checks to: WWP, P.O. Box 1770, Hailey, ID 83333. For credit card orders, fax this form to (208) 788-2298 or visit the WWP website for online credit card orders. Checks drawn on U.S. funds only, please.