



# **Western Watersheds Project** **MESSENGER**

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Spring 2016

**Of Wolves, Elk, and Wilderness: The Battle in the River of No Return**

**Livestock Permit Retirement in Wyoming!**

**The Plight of the Bumble Bee**



**Working to protect and restore western watersheds and wildlife through education, public policy initiatives and legal advocacy.**

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## Western Watersheds Project State and Regional Offices

Main Office .....P.O. Box 1770 • Hailey, ID 83333  
 (208) 788-2290 • [wwp@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:wwp@westernwatersheds.org)

Boise .....P.O. Box 2863 • Boise, ID 83701  
 (208) 429-1679 • [boise@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:boise@westernwatersheds.org)

Arizona .....738 N. 5th Avenue, Suite 200 • Tucson, AZ 85705  
 (520) 623-1878 • [arizona@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:arizona@westernwatersheds.org)

California .....P.O. Box 2364 • Reseda, CA 91337  
[california@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:california@westernwatersheds.org)

Wyoming, UT & CO .....P.O. Box 1160 • Pinedale, WY 82941  
 (877) 746-3628 • [wyoming@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:wyoming@westernwatersheds.org)

Montana .....P.O. Box 1135 • Hamilton, MT 59840  
 (406) 830-3099 • [montana@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:montana@westernwatersheds.org)

Oregon .....126 SE Alberta St, Ste 208 • Portland, OR 97211  
 (208) 421-4637 • [oregon@westernwatersheds.org](mailto:oregon@westernwatersheds.org)

WWP's Fax Number is (208) 475-4702



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# Of Wolves, Elk, and Wilderness: The Battle in the River of No Return

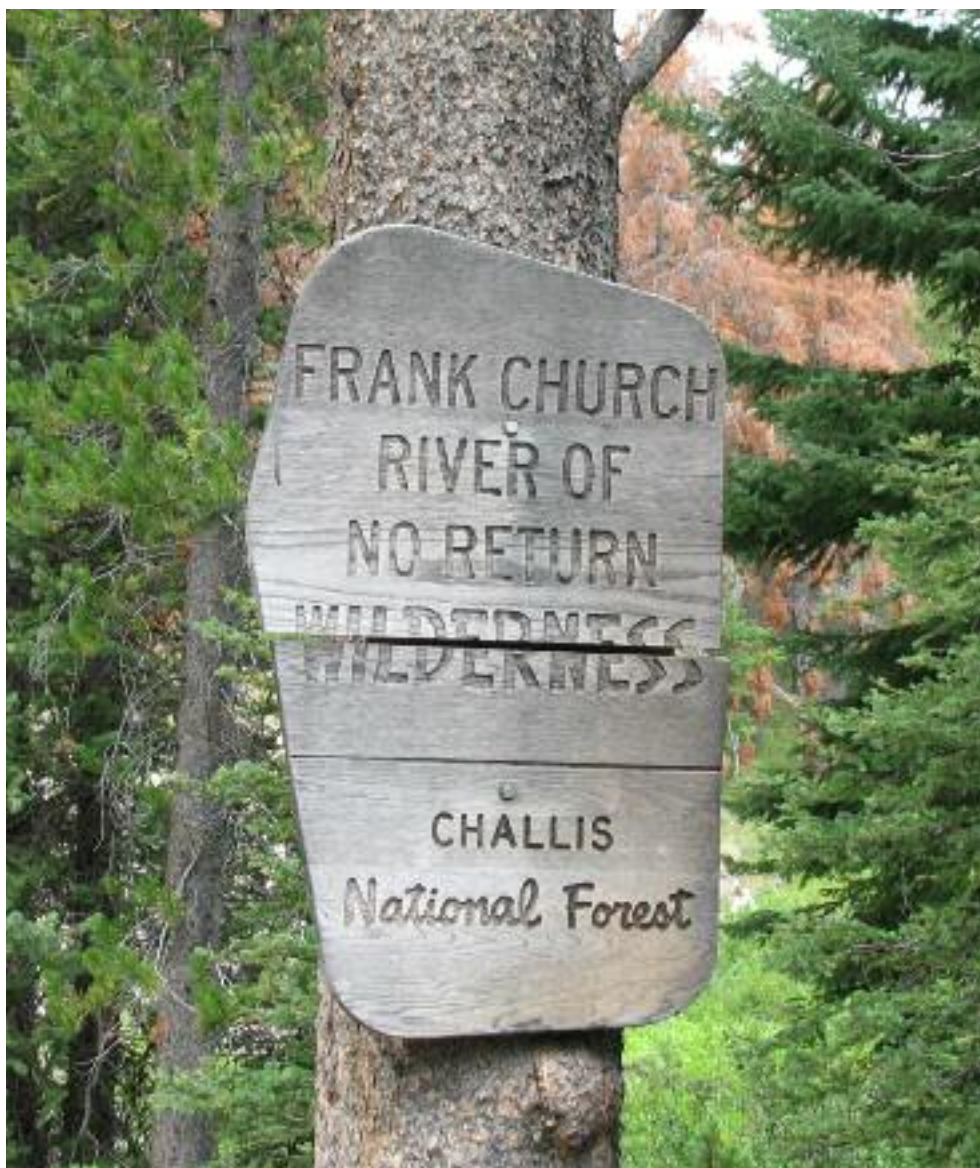


By Dana Johnson

*Condensed from the original article from Wilderness Watcher, the newsletter of Wilderness Watch, and reprinted with the permission of the author.*

It's January in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness—the largest contiguous expanse of wilderness in the Lower 48. Rising roughly 6,300 feet from the river bottom, old forests, rocky bluffs, and jagged crags connect with a massive network of ridges and drainages—refuge for the undomesticated. The elk have moved to lower elevations, browsing on south facing slopes, while mountain goats and bighorn sheep navigate the windswept scree and crags above.

Anyone who has spent time in wilderness in the depth of winter knows that the stillness is striking. The absence of noise makes any deviation from the status quo an acute jarring of the senses—the present moment demanding full, visceral attention. Avalanches pierce silence like a shotgun. Wolves project their long, mournful howls across the ridges. Trees, bending under the growing weight of winter, abruptly snap. Always, the crystalized silence settles once again awaiting the next carnal interruption. This January is different. Helicopters approach over the ridges and into the heart of the Wilderness, their mechanized thumping growing in intensity. Herds of panicked elk flee across their wintering grounds, legs scrambling to maintain the impossible trajectory. The helicopters swoop until close enough for the pas-



*Entering the Frank Church.*

sengers to take aim. The net-gun fires—one is hit. The helicopter touches down long enough for the passengers to jump and then returns to a hover over the entangled, waiting animal. She is “processed.” This scene replays over and over. When the helicopters leave, 64 animals will return to their wild companions carrying something new and out of place.

In January, the Forest Service authorized Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to make 120 helicopter landings in the River of No Return Wilderness to place radio telemetry collars on 60 elk. To our knowledge, this is the most extensive helicopter intrusion ever authorized in wilderness.

IDFG said the project was necessary to study an elk population decline that has occurred since the return of gray wolves to the Wilderness. Wilderness Watch, Friends of the Clearwater, and Western Watersheds Project filed suit in Federal District Court on January 7th. Within the next three days, IDFG inundated the River of No Return Wilderness with repeated helicopter flights and landings. And, even though it was abundantly clear that IDFG was not authorized to harass and collar wolves, IDFG nonetheless “mistakenly” captured and collared four wolves. Those 60 elk and four wolves now have collars transmitting radio telemetry data, including precise location points, to IDFG—an

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agency with a current plan to “aggressively manage elk and predator populations,” including exterminating 60 percent of the wolves within the Middle Fork Zone of the River of No Return Wilderness.

Our intelligence as a species has always been a double-edged sword. Scientific and technological advances have allowed the human population to increase rapidly, which in turn has significantly taxed the basic elements needed for our survival. Indeed, an alarming number of our non-human counterparts have recently made their untimely departure to the world of extinction. Computers, Wi-Fi, and cell-phones have made it easier to stay connected, organize for causes, and access information, yet we find it more and more difficult to disconnect from the pressures of modern life and to meaningfully connect with other people and the land around us—the real world. Ed Abbey duly noted that “[h]igh technology has done us one great service: It has retaught us the delight of performing simple and primordial tasks—chopping wood, building a fire, drawing water from a spring.” There is a profound reason for this delight. We are rapidly losing something immeasurable and very old. Something



© MARK SPENCER

*The beautiful Frank Church Wilderness of No Return*

that runs much deeper than our new-world focus on recreation. Something much deeper than our abstract economic and scientific labels. Something that is not compatible with helicopters, drones, satellite collars, industrial clear-cutting, motorized and mechanized transport, corporate sponsorships, Facebook, and

text messages. We are destroying this very old thing—sometimes with the best of intentions.

The drafters of the Wilderness Act saw this threat. In 1964 and the years preceding, these wilderness visionaries knew that the rapid expansion of the human population coupled with the rapid progression of technology and mechanization was inevitable. They also knew that this trajectory posed significant irreparable harm to our last wild places and to our own human existence. They understood that even though they could not know all of the forms that our technological advancement might take, they could define its opposite, the wild baseline, and put forth a firm intention to protect the wild above all else. They envisioned and promoted various human uses of wilderness, including scientific and recreational uses, but they expressly subjected each of those uses to compatibility with a primary purpose: the preservation of wilderness character. The drafters provided this definition of wilderness:

*A wilderness, in contrast with those areas*

**Please join us at Western Watersheds Project's 2016 Board Meeting**

**This year we will be in Bend, OR Friday, June 17th.**

**Please visit [westernwatersheds.org/boardmeeting](http://westernwatersheds.org/boardmeeting) for more information on how to RSVP**



where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. [It is] an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions...

Luckily for us, and due in large part to wilderness designation, we still have pockets of untrammelled, primordial space—landscapes protected from our relentless industrial and technological growth and from our unending conquest to defy physical space. With 7.4 billion people now on this planet, and with our insatiable appetites for consumption and control, the pressures against these primordial spaces are mounting. The Wildernesses of central Idaho are comparatively and contiguously massive. We have a real opportunity, and a real obligation, to protect them. We need wilderness much more than we need more



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*Northwest Rafting Co. on the Pistol Creek Rapid, Middle fork of the Salmon River*

information about wilderness. And, if that information leads ultimately to control of wilderness, it does not preserve wilderness. Through the Wilderness

Act, we made the decision to limit our power, to exercise restraint and humility. Wilderness is a place where we've decided to let time move slowly, let distances remain great, let wildness do its thing without interference, and let danger and uncertainty exist without temperance. We would have much to learn if we could only resist our urge to meddle.

I fear that with each passing generation, our memory of truly wild landscapes will fade. I can't imagine a world where a handheld device tells me—shows me—what to expect around every corner, or a world where once fiercely wild animals roam the wilderness with collars on their necks—their every movement transmitted to a computer, manned by a human who works for an agency that does not value things it cannot control. If anything must be controlled, for the sake of wilderness, it is us.

*Dana Johnson is an attorney for Wilderness Watch. She lives in Moscow, ID.*



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*Board member Kelley Weston treks through the Frank Church in support of WWP's efforts.*



# The Same Old Story



By Karen Klitz

Land-grab groups will probably never go away. The human potential for being short-sighted and destructive will most likely perpetuate the desired exploitation of our public lands far into the future. Take heart, the takeover hasn't happened in spite of decades of effort!

I wanted to share a little historical passage which shows how similar the fight was in 1947. I discovered it in correspondence of the Cooper Ornithological Club which I am cataloguing for the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. The Cooper Club was quite active in contemporary conservation fights, and received a National Park Services' memo encouraging distribution of an editorial written by then-Acting Region Four Director Herbert Maier.

## Plunder in the West



By Herbert Maier

Prior to the November elections the *Star-Times* called attention to a campaign of stockmen and wool-growers for legislation to weaken and eventually to eliminate federal control of the millions of acres of public forest and grazing lands in Western states.

The campaign is well organized and it already has been carried to Washington in the form of such bills as that of Senator Robertson of Wyoming in the last session to transfer federal lands to 13 Western states and to vest in these the right to dispose of the lands as they see fit. It aims not only at forest and grazing tracts, but also at national parks and monuments.

Bills to implement this war of attrition



*The face off at Bundy Ranch in 2014*

have met with admirable resistance in the past, but the interests pushing them are not easily discouraged. It seems almost inevitable that they will try to capitalize on the reaction against federal regulations which many members of the new Congress, rightly or wrongly, interpret as a reason for their being in Washington. That is why it is important now for the people outside the 13 states directly involved to be warned.

This land belongs to the citizens of all the 48 states. When one considers that some 27,000,000 acres of forest land alone are involved, one can realize what is at stake.

Summing up the pressure that was generated at a meeting last fall of some committees of the American National Livestock Association and the National Wool-Growers Association, Bernard DeVoto puts it this way in the January issue of *Harper's Magazine*:

*The immediate objectives make this attempt one of the biggest land grabs in American history. The ultimate objectives make it incomparably the biggest. The plan is to get rid of public lands altogether, turning them over to the states, which can be coerced as the federal government cannot be, and eventually to private ownership.*

What the livestock interests are after - and Mr. DeVoto points this out - is greater freedom in the use of lands which they are allowed to use now at less than they pay for using private grazing land. And if their consistent attacks on the regulations of the Grazing Service are any criterion, they want more freedom to over-graze and thus condemn new millions of acres to erosion. Thus their case is weakened by the fact they already enjoy what amounts to a government subsidy and by a flagrant disregard for the preservation of timber, grass, soil and scenic beauty which, once destroyed, cannot be restored except by the slow processes of nature.

The reaction of fair-minded Congressmen should be obvious. It should be against any weakening of the nation's defense of already depleted resources that are essential to the well-being of the whole country, let alone the Western states. But more than that, why shouldn't Congress look into the matter of fees on public lands? If these are lower than are charged for private lands, is it not in the interest of fairness as well as in the interest of securing



new government revenue wherever possible to put them on a par with private rates?

The people in St. Louis, Chicago and New York who pay current high prices for beefsteak are entitled to assurance that the profits of the producer are not unduly inflated because of inequitable concessions in the use of public lands. Certainly this is a valid retaliatory argument.

Unfortunately, there seems to be little opposition to the livestock interests in the states involved even though they would be heavy losers in the end. The blocking of this movement, then, is up to Congressmen who can think and act in terms of national welfare. The problem calls for statesmanship of the highest order and for no little agitation on the part of every one of the 140,000,000 people whose equity in public lands is every bit as great as that of the few whose only interest is in selfish gain.

*Reprinted from the St. Louis Star-Times  
Tuesday, January 21, 1947*

## Livestock Permit Retirement in Wyoming!

In January, the US Forest Service accepted five relinquished sheep grazing permits and administratively closed 65,000 acres on the Bridger Teton National Forest! The Cross Lake, Bunion, Temple Creek, Raid Lake, and a portion of the East Fork allotment will be free of sheep for the foreseeable future!

The allotments lie within the Bridger Wilderness and intersect with the habitat of the Temple Peak bighorn sheep herd, a core native herd in Wyoming. The new retirements also overlap with the potential habitat of traveling bighorn from the Whiskey herd and will reduce the risk of contact and potential for disease transmission between the native and domestic animals. The allotments also contain habitat for wolves and grizzlies, and removal of domestic livestock will reduce the opportunity for conflict with these predators.

These closures complement previous buyouts and domestic sheep are now completely removed from the Wind River Range on the national forest, and no longer will domestic livestock impair the Wilderness or its scenic, aesthetic, and recreational values.

This achievement is due to the hard work of WWP's representative on the Sagebrush Habitat Conservation Fund and undisclosed partners. Thanks to all for this wonderful accomplishment!



*65,000 acres of the Wind River range is protected from domestic livestock!*

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*WWP has protected these areas for the benefit of bighorn sheep.*



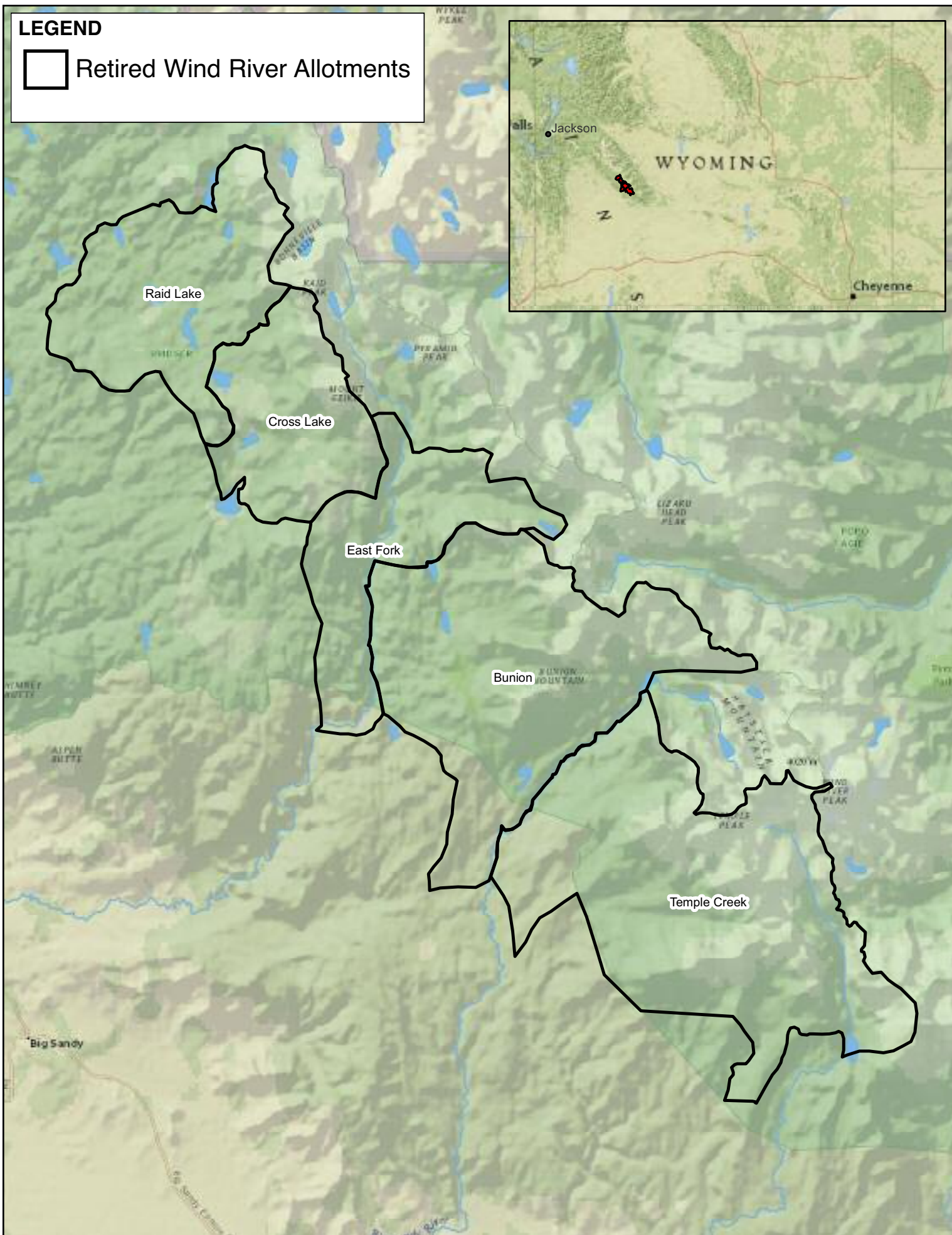
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# LEGEND



Retired Wind River Allotments





# The Plight of the Bumble Bee



By Michael J. Connor

On March 16, 2016 the Forest Service began a status review of the Western Bumble Bee (*Bombus occidentalis*) to determine if it warrants listing under the Endangered Species Act. This key pollinator of native plants is experiencing dramatic declines in abundance and range.

Historically, the Western Bumble Bee was found from the Pacific coast to the Colorado Rocky Mountains, the Great Basin, and north to Alaska. There have been severe population declines west of the Sierra-Cascade Crest. The USDA suggests the severe declines in California may be due to diseases introduced with escaped European bumble bees traded commercially for their use in greenhouse pollination of plants such as tomatoes. However, throughout their range they are assailed by insecticides, and by habitat degradation and loss.

Like many other bees, the Western Bumble Bee lives in a colony. But unlike honey bees, the Western Bumble Bee nests underground. The queen typically founds a colony in early spring by selecting a disused rodent burrow that suits her purposes. There she lays her first batch of eggs, tends and raises the initial batch of young, and these worker bees then take over food gathering and tending the colony. Towards the end of season (mid to late summer) the queen produces proportionately more drones and queens. These queens mate, disperse, and then go dormant for the winter. The cycle starts again in the next spring when the queens awaken.

Their preferred nesting location seems to be meadows where a diversity



*Western Bumble Bee (Bombus occidentalis)*

of flowers provides pollen over the spring-summer season. Unfortunately for the Western Bumble Bee, as WWP supporters well know, many of these meadows on our public lands are grazed by livestock. Cattle and sheep may affect nesting location availability by compressing the soil, crushing rodent burrows, and changing the overall density of rodent burrows. But more importantly, livestock presence shapes the meadow plant community structure and reduces the diversity of flowers available.

Agency monitoring of utilization frequently is based on stubble height or other minimal approaches. But since flowers are often at the tops of meadow plants even “light utilization” can drastically reduce the available flowers that

these Bumble Bees need. This is a particular concern towards the end of the summer when floral resources are naturally less plentiful but more protein rich pollen is needed to nurture the newly born queens so they can mature, mate and disperse to form next year’s colonies.

In the last few years, the USFWS seems to have adopted a policy of not listing any species from the United States. Whether or not the Western Bumble Bee is placed on the endangered species list, Western Watersheds Project will work to ensure that land use agencies consider Western Bumble Bee conservation when making grazing decisions.

*Michael Connor is WWP’s California Director. He lives in Reseda, CA.*

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## Zombie Grazing Plans



By Erik Ryberg

Forest Service grazing plans deceptively change names, change focus, vanish, and reappear. I have learned to keep an especially sharp eye out for what I call "zombie" grazing plans, those that get released for public comment and then shelved by the agency, only to re-emerge years later under a different name. Usually these plans are particularly awful ones, bad enough that the agency preferred to shelve them rather than fight for them.

The Tonto National Forest in Arizona came out with a flurry of such projects a few years ago, none of which made it past the public comment stage before vanishing. One of these plans, the "Salt River Vegetation Plan," would have increased grazing by 70 percent in the Salt River Canyon, permitted backhoes and bulldozers in Wilderness Areas, degraded many archaeological sites, and increased livestock use in already overgrazed riparian areas.

When the Environmental Impact Statement landed on my desk I expected the worst, but after spending just a few moments reading the thing, it became apparent the project was so illegal it stood no chance. In my comments on the project I simply told the Forest Service to expect litigation, and gave a list of what our arguments would be. Within a few months the project was canceled.

The Tonto National Forest has either canceled or put on permanent hold a half-dozen such projects in the past year, projects that involve hundreds of thousands of acres. For example, the "Little Green Valley Complex" grazing proposal would have doubled livestock grazing across a third of the Payson Ranger

District, an area of some 265 square miles, much of it in the Hellsgate Wilderness Area. Like the Salt River project, it was canceled, along with the Red Creek project, which would have increased livestock on about 220 square miles in much of the Mazatzal and Pine Wilderness Areas. All of these plans involved dramatic increases in permitted livestock numbers, and all involved riparian area grazing that even the Forest Service specialists cautioned against.

In my experience, when agency staff are willing to go on record questioning the wisdom of a proposal, it is probably a pretty bad proposal. I am glad these projects have all been shelved, and proud of whatever role I played in getting them there. But in a bureaucracy new personalities come around, new District Rangers show up wanting to prove something, and they are always tempted to reach for that very shelf where the abandoned proposals lie, and resurrect them. WWP will continue to keep a keen watch in order to stop the Forest Services' bad behavior.

*Erik Ryberg is WWP's Arizona Legal Counsel. He lives in Etna, CA.*



*Zombie cows coming for our public lands*

## 19th Century Mentality is Alive and Kicking in 21st Century Wyoming



By Jonathan Ratner

The sticky web of problems caused by ranching in the West includes degraded fisheries and riparian habitats, soil erosion, loss of healthy vegetative communities, killing of predators, and the destruction of recreational areas. This is probably familiar to most readers, but Wyoming, not to be outdone, adds another problem to the long list. It was not long after statehood when ranchers in western Wyoming started complaining about "the problem" of elk using prime winter range as the animals had been doing since the end of the last Ice Age. These pesky elk were eating some of the grass those ranchers wanted for their cattle. So they did what ranchers know how to do best – they got someone else to pay to fix the problem they created.

Starting around 1907, ranchers got the state to pay for and feed elk away from their traditional winter range. Instead of just fencing their haystacks, a simple and cheap solution, they created a network of 22 state-run feedlots as well as the mother of all feedlots, the National Elk Refuge. Together these feedlots trap more than 30,000 elk each winter. This feedlot network destroyed part of the ecosystem, the long distance migration routes which connected the Greater Yellowstone area with areas as far south as the Red Desert. But the "law of unintended consequences" was just beginning to kick in.

When you treat wildlife like livestock you get all the problems that come from confined feeding operations, like disease

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*Elk feedlots create a high density winter population that is prone to disease transmission.*

transmission. The first iteration of this was brucellosis. Brucellosis arrived in the New World along with Old World livestock. The livestock passed the disease to wildlife. The effect of the disease is a high rate of miscarriages, something that has a high impact on rancher's bottom lines. Brucellosis was eliminated in livestock but persisted in the wild species. Within feedlot elk, the prevalence of brucellosis is very high, which could re-infect livestock and puts these same ranchers at risk of losing their brucellosis-free status.

Unfortunately, brucellosis is just one of many diseases spread in these feedlots. Another is *Fusobacterium necrophorum*,

which causes hoof rot, a terrible way to die, not just rotting the hooves but destroying the internal organs. It's caused by elk wallowing in their own feces for long periods of time.

These are minor problems compared to the real crisis on the doorstep, chronic wasting disease or "CWD." CWD is a 100% fatal prion disease similar to bovine spongiform encephalopathy ("Mad Cow Disease") and its human form, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Prions are quite unlike contagious disease agents that we are generally familiar with such as bacteria, viruses and fungi. Prions are not alive, but merely misshapen proteins, yet they only need a single stand

to infect a host and remain infectious for decades in the environment. Prions are resistant to most normal sterilization procedures and bind well with soil particles. Recent research found that plants take up the prions and when a host eats the plant the prions are still infectious. Since introduction into the wild, likely from a research facility in Colorado in the 1960s, CWD has spread to about twenty states and two Canadian provinces. Under normal conditions, CWD prevalence in the wild is fairly low, but the high concentration of elk on feedlots changes everything. Once CWD reaches these elk feedlots, mortality rates will likely approach 100%. This is a very real threat to wildlife populations.

In Wyoming, CWD has been radiating out from the southeastern corner of the state at a rate of nearly two million acres per year. So it's only a matter of a few more years before CWD hits the web of elk feedlots in Wyoming. Once that happens, because of the long incubation time, infected elk from these feedlots will have plenty of time to move about the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, shedding prions and spreading the disease until they finally succumb.

It doesn't take much to see this wildlife crisis barreling towards us, but the State of Wyoming, ranchers and outfitters, with their heads deeply planted in the sand, have been dead-set on maintaining the status quo, no matter what the costs. Aside from the ecological nightmare, the twenty-two state-run feedlots costs taxpayers more than \$2,000,000 a year.

WWP plans to confront this issue head on in the courts. Hopefully, a federal judge will be more receptive to science and reason than is the Forest Service.

*Jonathan Ratner is WWP's Wyoming, Colorado & Utah Director. He lives in Pinedale, WY.*



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*The industrialized elk of Wyoming*



# Grazed and Ungrazed Oregon landscapes



By Paul Ruprecht

Verdant spring vegetation, wildlife, and water were all apparent on several recent trips to public lands in Oregon's high desert. Unfortunately, in some

places, livestock impacts were apparent too.

In early April, WWP Board member George Wuerthner and I visited a number of sites in the Lost River watershed to observe the condition of streams inhabited by endangered shortnose and Lost River suckers. The fish are threatened by habitat degradation, lack of water, and poor water quality.

Barnes Valley Creek, a tributary to Gerber Reservoir west of Lakeview, is designated critical habitat for shortnose sucker and is a primary spawning area for the species. The trampled streambanks, heavily grazed riparian vegetation, and cattle waste in the creek seemed likely to undermine the benefit of above-average streamflows this year.

Other nearby sucker critical habitat like Wildhorse and Willow Creeks also showed unstable banks and lack of riparian vegetation. WWP is hopeful that conditions for the endangered suckers will improve following an ongoing lawsuit challenging livestock grazing in sucker habitat on the Fremont-Winema National Forest. [www.westernwatersheds.org/sucker-complaint](http://www.westernwatersheds.org/sucker-complaint)

In contrast, a small section of the Sprague River in the same region—where grazing is not authorized—was lush with willows and grasses and bustling with songbirds. Several other livestock-free areas I visited this month were showcasing their spring beauty as well. The bunchgrass communities at Smith



*Barnes Valley Creek, a tributary to Gerber Reservoir.*

Rock State Park are robust after decades of no grazing. The bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue blanketing the hillsides above the Crooked River contrast with the absence of big native grasses on many BLM-managed lands in Central Oregon. Areas of the lower Deschutes River also have healthy upland vegetation communities in the absence of livestock.

In the Badger Creek Wilderness on the east side of the Mount Hood National Forest, arrowleaf balsamroot, Indian paintbrush, waterleaf, Lomatium, and many other wildflowers were out in

force. I saw flocks of yellow-rumped warblers and other birds feeding on insects in the Oregon white oak buds. I enjoyed seeing deer, elk, and bear sign instead of cowpies. This is an excellent time to visit public lands in Central Oregon, and the rare areas that are not subjected to livestock grazing offer a tantalizing glimpse into how all of our public lands should look.

*Paul Ruprecht is WWP's Staff Attorney.  
He lives in Portland, OR.*



*Barnes Valley Creek, a tributary to Gerber Reservoir.*



# The Battle at Battle Mountain

By Ken Cole



In 2014, at the height of ongoing and extreme drought in northern Nevada, riparian and upland areas were beaten to dust by cattle hooves and

important sage grouse habitat was severely degraded on the Argenta allotment. The Battle Mountain District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) decided they had to do something about the condition of the allotment and temporarily closed several grazing use areas. The Argenta permittees had a different idea, appealed the decision, set up a protest camp across the street from the BLM office with signs encouraging people to honk their horns as they drove by, and held a “Grass March” to deliver a petition to the BLM headquarters in Washington, D.C. in order to restore grazing.

As a result of permittee protests, the BLM’s national and Nevada offices caved and ordered the Battle Mountain District to enter into settlement negotiations with the permittees. The Nevada



*A putrid creek on the Argenta allotment.*

office also called in the National Riparian Service Team (NRST), a team composed of specialists in the monitoring of upland and riparian areas. Western Watersheds Project also appealed the decision and was present at those settlement negotiations.

WWP asked for triggers for removal of cattle related to bank trampling standards, riparian stubble height standards, and upland utilization standards. We also asked the BLM to reduce livestock numbers instead of building damaging

range developments like fences and water developments.

Unfortunately, at every turn, the BLM weakened the terms of the settlement agreement to suit the desires of the permittees and also agreed to consider building several new fences and water developments. The BLM also formed a Cooperative Monitoring Group (CMG) consisting of the BLM, NRST, permittees, intervenors to the appeals, the Nevada Department of Wildlife, and Western Watersheds Project.

Because the settlement agreement was so weak, WWP refused to sign it. We did agree to be part of the CMG that would provide input into the monitoring process and participate in ecological evaluations in an attempt to make them meaningful and honest.

Immediately after the formation of the CMG, the permittees began to complain about monitoring sites and methods. The NRST went along with them despite our warranted concerns. It quickly became evident that the game was rigged. Right out of the gate, the BLM issued a decision to build the first round of range projects. We provided our comments, protested the proposed decision, and then appealed



*Severe erosion caused by decades of cattle grazing on the Argenta allotment.*



the final decision.

Another function of the CMG was to provide an annual report to the public of the progress made toward achieving the goals of the settlement agreement. Instead of using BLM methods to determine whether the utilization standards in the Agreement had been reached, the NRST watered down the standards in every way possible to put the results in the best light for the ranchers. The reality was that monitoring showed grazing damage on the allotment was worse than the previous year and that no real progress had been made.

Because of the NRST's flawed monitoring methods, WWP objected to the report and requested reductions in livestock after resting the allotment for a significant period to allow for recovery. The NRST went ahead and issued the biased report before our disputes have been fully resolved. At the writing of this article, we have not heard back from the NRST regarding our objections or from the BLM about whether they agree with the guidance from the NRST.

Regardless, we're not waiting around for the CMG to determine the fate of the Argenta allotment. We have now filed a federal lawsuit against the BLM alleging that the decision to approve the first round of range developments was illegal because it doesn't comply with the new sage grouse Resource Management Plan Amendments. Our lawsuit also alleges that the BLM's decision violates the National Environmental Policy Act by analyzing grazing infrastructure outside of assessing grazing permit renewal, prejudicing the outcome of the question whether grazing ought to continue at all in these sensitive habitats.

We expect an outcome in the case by early 2017.

*Ken Cole is WWP's Idaho Director. He Lives in Boise, ID.*



## Western Watersheds Project 2015 Annual Financial Report

### INCOME

Memberships and Major Donors.....	128,100
Grants.....	575,800
Events and Earned Income.....	36,400
Legal Fee Recovery.....	13,400
<b>Total Income.....</b>	<b>\$753,700</b>

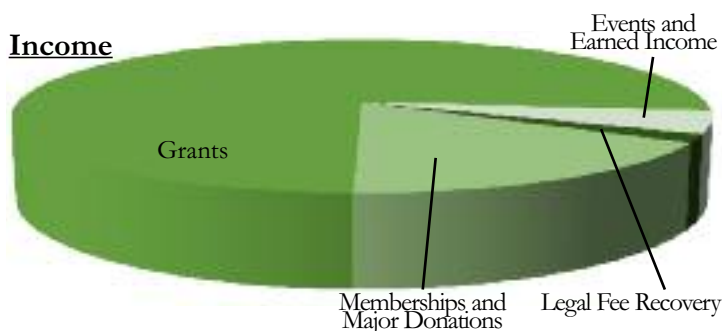
### EXPENSES

Accounting.....	3,200
Donation Processing.....	1,900
Conferences and Meetings.....	4,400
Contract Services.....	15,700
Equipment Rental and Maintenance.....	2,400
Insurance.....	43,800
Legal.....	19,100
Occupancy.....	25,000
Payroll.....	402,900
Payroll Expenses.....	36,500
Postage and Shipping.....	5,500
Printing and Publications.....	119,100
Grazing Leases.....	400
Supplies.....	4,800
Telephone.....	7,600
Travel.....	28,800
Website.....	1,300
<b>Total Expenses.....</b>	<b>\$722,400</b>

**NET INCOME..... \$31,300**

\*All figures rounded.

### Income



### Expenses







## WESTERN WATERSHEDS PROJECT

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### Thank You for Your Continued Support!

Every day the public lands, streams and wildlife throughout the West benefit because of the work done by Western Watersheds Project. The agency management plans we challenge, the allotments we monitor, and the lawsuits we file all help to protect and restore our western public lands.

- **Any size donation is greatly appreciated and makes a difference!** Everything WWP does to influence the restoration of western public lands is based on a vision that western North America may be one of the only places on earth where enough of the native landscape and wildlife still exists to make possible the restoration of a wild natural world.
- **Make a gift of appreciated stock.** Talk to your accountant or financial planner about the potential tax benefits of making this type of donation.
- **A gift through careful estate planning can make a lasting difference for WWP.** A bequest, an arrangement made in a donor's will, is a simple and uncomplicated approach to planned giving. Other methods to facilitate a planned giving donation include: charitable remainder trust, charitable lead trust and gift annuity. It may be wise to talk to your accountant or financial planner to fully understand the potential tax benefits of different giving options.
- **Help others learn about WWP!** Recently, WWP supporters hosted events in Pocatello, Idaho and Berkeley, California to help us spread the word about our important work. You can host an event too and WWP will help. We'll supply informational materials, send out email/printed invitations combining your guest list with local WWP supporters, and even have a WWP representative attend a "meet & greet" which can be customized to your area of interest or concern.



The Western Watersheds Project Messenger is printed using vegetable-based inks on carbon neutral, 100% post-consumer waste.

