



Wild Utah Project  
2010 Annual Report

## On the Value of Wildness

Intertwined with their beauty and wildness, the Wasatch Mountains surrounding the communities of the Salt Lake Valley sustain our quality of life and serve as a constant reminder of our stewardship over our remarkable natural resources in Utah. Salt Lake City's health, security, and economic prosperity are dependent on this mountain range. They provide clean drinking water, clean air, diverse recreational opportunities, and landscape-scale habitat protection.

Keeping these mountain ecosystems whole and healthy is critical for us to continue to provide our growing population with clean water and air, and to continue to protect biodiversity so that we remain resilient and adaptive to the environmental challenges we may face.

*Mayor Ralph Becker, Salt Lake City, testimony in support for Wasatch Wilderness and Watershed Protection Act of 2010*

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**Groups Wild Utah Project works closely with:**

Arizona Riparian Council  
Bear River Watershed Council  
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Center for Native Ecosystems  
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Western Watersheds Project  
Western Wildlife Conservancy  
Wildlands Network  
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Liz Larsen, Hogle Zoo's Conservation Specialist and Kimber Clark, Animal Care Staff, volunteered on a Grand Canyon Trust led beaver habitat study trip to Boulder Mountain in southern Utah. Photo: Amy O'Connor

**Agencies and Universities we work with:**

Brigham Young University  
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Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Utah Partners for Conservation and Development  
Utah Governor's Office  
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Prickly pear cactus.  
Photo: © Howie Garber



**WILD  
UTAH  
PROJECT**

## Wild Utah Project: Science in Support of Wildland Health

### The Big Picture: Executive Summary

Biological systems throughout the West have been fragmented and most wildlife habitat is degraded. Our lands and living communities that depend on them have lost much of their resiliency — their ability to withstand and bounce back from stresses. Climate change, energy development, outdated land management practices and many other forces threaten the existence of wild creatures and the communities of life that we treasure. An overwhelming consensus of scientists now believes that climate change already has brought, and will bring with it, serious repercussions including a dryer and warmer climate in the Southwest.

As climatic change and many other factors impact wildlands and wildlife, Wild Utah Project complements the work of our many conservation partners by focusing on five key program areas that will help restore resiliency to biological systems. Our programs include:

**1) Ecoregional Planning Program.** While change does not come easily to federal land management agencies, Wild Utah Project has pushed for improved planning and implementation of land management plans and protocols since its inception in 1996. Our current efforts include encouraging the placement of renewable energy facilities in the right places.

**2) Range Management Reform Program.** We continue our work to get land management agencies to take an honest look at one of our wildlands' key stressors: livestock grazing as traditionally practiced. Much of the West's land base is degraded due in part to traditional grazing, yet few are willing to acknowledge the detrimental long-term consequences this will have on wildlife as well as people's interests. It's a tough issue as we deal with long-entrenched practices with little science to back up current management regimes, and a denial of what is actually happening to most of our lands

on-the-ground. Our rational approach to range management reform involves bringing the best science, based in empirical evidence, to the agencies. This entails us designing and carrying out long-term studies that will clearly show what best management practices are for livestock grazing.



Cougar require a large home range. By ensuring that core wild areas are connected by corridors through which cougar are able to pass, we can help ensure the species' survival. Photo: © Howie Garber

Our lands and living communities that depend on them have lost much of their resiliency — their ability to withstand and bounce back from stresses. Climate change, energy development, outdated land management practices and many other forces threaten the existence of wild creatures and the communities of life that we treasure.

**3) Riparian Program.** While many are not aware of the problem, most of our streams in the West are today in a degraded condition and are not at their biological potential. This is at the detriment of both human and wildlife needs. We continue to focus our work on identifying priority streams for restoration and working with conservation partners and agencies to improve the plight of our streams. In 2010, we continued this work by building momentum through training agency representatives and conservationists in our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment Method, an easy-to-use, scientifically sound tool, the adoption of which is snowballing across the region as more and more people recognize its ease and effectiveness. With the Bureau of Land Management, we continue to advocate that they reform their riparian assessment method.

**4) Off-road Vehicle Program.** We continue to encourage the use of Wild Utah Project's and Wildlands CPR's off-road vehicle Best Management Practices to provide guidance in the management of off-road vehicle use. It now appears that the U.S. Forest Service is considering the use of our off-road vehicle Best Management Practice document in their new off-highway vehicle guidance document for Forest Service staff across the country.

**5) Conservation Community Support.** In 2010, we continued to be on call to help our conservation partners with analysis and mapping tools to help move their issues. This year we feature a special, new partnership with a large, "natural" housing development with a progressive Homeowners Association.

Wild Utah Project has a unique role within the conservation community in helping to shape public land and water management. With the help of our many partners, we bring the principles of conservation biology into land management practices that have to date been more focused on promoting consumption. Wild Utah Project's strategy can be summed up in the following:

**Keeping and Restoring Ecological Function**  
+  
**Ensuring Interconnectedness**  
=  
**Long-Term Wildland and Wildlife Resilience**

Wild Utah Project was initiated in 1996 and as long as the need for our work persists — and with the generous investment of our individual, business and foundation supporters and numerous partners — we plan to be here for a while, providing the necessary science to maintain and, where needed, restore our natural lands. The following report gives the highlights of our efforts in 2010. Thanks to all of you who support and partner with the Wild Utah Project!



Check out our website:  
[www.wildutahproject.org](http://www.wildutahproject.org)

## Ecoregional Planning Program

*Implementing landscape level, biologically-based land use plans primarily through changes in federal land management*

### 2010 Ecoregional Planning Program in a nutshell...

Landscape scale land use planning based on ecosystem health should be the foundation for designing land uses. Wildlands networks that we have helped design look to the needs of focal species, especially large predators and other indicator species, to map a network of core areas and linkages of habitat required to sustain these species. Such wildlands networks describe where development is appropriate and other lands where conservation of wildlands and wildlife should be a priority.

In 2010, our work on ecoregional planning included promoting and implementing the Heart of the West Wildlands Network in northern Utah, pushing for responsible renewable energy siting in Utah, and bringing the core concepts concerning the importance of connected landscapes to our colleagues and the public.

### Responsible Renewable Energy Siting in Utah

The state of Utah is actively working to promote energy efficiency (conservation) and renewable energy sources including large scale facilities in renewable energy development zones in the state. Utah's goal is to be 20% more efficient in the use of energy and to produce 20% of Utah's electricity with renewable energy sources by 2025. At this time, just 2% of our electricity in Utah comes from wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, and solar renewable energy. An interesting side note here:

roughly 1,900 jobs in Utah are in the coal industry which supplies 50% of the total energy used in Utah or about 85% of our electricity. Solar, wind and geothermal power generation is supported by 2,300 jobs in Utah.

Therefore, 2% of our electricity from renewable energy has led to more jobs than the coal industry now provides.

Imagine how many jobs we will have if 20% of our energy comes from renewable energy!

Public lands are increasingly being selected as the first choice for new renewable energy development both for



At this time, just 2% of our electricity in Utah comes from wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, and solar renewable energy. Yet, solar, wind and geothermal power generation is supported by 2,300 jobs in Utah. Only about 1,900 jobs in Utah are in the coal industry which supplies about 85% of our electricity. Photo: Publication by U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, *Wind and Water Power Program*, photo by Iberdrola Renewables

generation and transmission. Wild Utah Project has played a role in helping a number of conservation partners work on reshaping this emphasis. We would like to see renewable energy built on brownfields and other already impacted lands AND located in the built environment first (see sidebar about renewable energy concepts,

**Concepts regarding renewable energy development that has the least possible impact on wildlands and wildlife:**

**Concept 1 for renewable development: Large-scale renewable energy facilities on brownfield sites.** For large, centralized, renewable energy, the Environmental Protection Agency has put together a list of 490,000 areas that total 15 million acres across the country that are no longer wild, and are well-suited for renewable energy. Rather than going to wild places on public lands first to site renewable energy, we should site renewable facilities in these degraded areas first (see Environmental Protection Agency's website at <http://www.epa.gov/oswercpa/>).

**Concept 2 for renewable development: Distributed power.** Often on a smaller scale, and often integrated within communities, distributed power within city limits has similar costs and economic returns compared to large-scale projects for renewable energy. This leads to more jobs on a permanent basis in local communities AND it does not require new, expensive transmission lines. Distributed power has been successful in many places and most of the obstacles to it are social, bureaucratic, and legal, not economic.

this page). But at the same time, it became apparent to Wild Utah Project that Utah's public lands and wildlife advocates needed to provide input to the renewable energy planning process in Utah to help ensure that the projects that are slated for public lands are developed in a responsible manner that will avoid unnecessary conflicts with wildlife. An added benefit is that our participation will hopefully lead to selection of renewable sites that avoid wildlife impacts in the first place.

Based on this need, in 2009 Wild Utah Project formed a partnership with Western Resource Advocates and Utah Clean Energy, to help shape the Governor's new 10-year energy policy and positively affect new renewable energy production in Utah, with special emphasis on doing it right by wildlife and their habitat. Along with our partners, in 2010 Wild Utah Project accomplished the following:

- **Wild Utah Project engaged fully in the Utah Renewable Energy Zone Task Force from the end of 2009 through 2010. At every opportunity we advocated for renewable energy that keeps Utah wild.** For example, we presented recommendations on which habitats are most important to avoid and offered options to avoid sensitive areas. Our input included GIS data (maps) that identified important lands to conserve, such as the Utah Wilderness Coalition's Redrock Wilderness Proposal, roadless National

Forest Lands, wildlands networks, and critical habitat such as for the Gunnison sage grouse in southeastern Utah. We are happy to report that, because of suitable screening by the state task force, there are very few proposed renewable energy zones in Utah that we disagree with.

- **We worked with many partners to create Best Management Practices for developing wind and solar energy projects that ensure that wildlife needs are met.** Many current guidelines focus on permit approval and other agency processes and often miss the necessary steps to assess and minimize the impacts to wildlife in renewable energy siting decisions. Modeled after similar best management practices for off-road vehicle decisions and management that we helped create, Wild Utah

At the last minute, the Bureau of Land Management threw us for a loop. With little vetting, the agency's preferred alternative for the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement will offer two million more acres for solar development, many of which are wilderness candidate areas.

Project began assembling the knowledge we have on renewable energy impacts in wild places. We researched existing studies that show the best way to mitigate these impacts through site location and operation. Our Renewable Energy Development Best Management Practices document, completed earlier this year, will provide a

proactive tool to developers, conservation organizations, and other decision-makers who seek to positively affect or develop renewable energy in the West.

- **Wild Utah Project made sure that we had our finger on the pulse of any new, large-scale, wind or solar developments coming down the pike for Utah in order to protect wildlands and wildlife.** Part of this work included meeting with developers who are lining up to be major players in solar energy in Utah, and providing them with maps of renewable energy zones and potential conflict areas, such as Gunnison sage grouse core areas. Our information was welcomed.
- **Wild Utah Project also got involved with the Bureau of Land Management's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement which will guide solar development on Bureau of Land Management lands in the West. We hope to help minimize environmental impact.** Early in the process, we were encouraged to learn that the Bureau of Land Management seemed to be chiefly focused on areas determined to have little in the way of environmental impacts if they were developed for



The Utah prairie dog is one of the many species that can be adversely affected by large scale energy development on yet wild public lands. The Best Management Practices for developing wind and solar energy projects that Wild Utah Project created will help minimize conflicts with wildlife when applied to new developments. Photo: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

solar. All three of these “Solar Energy Zones” in Utah (which together comprise 20,000 acres) are outside of Utah Wilderness Coalition’s candidate wilderness areas. Two of these sites, the Milford and Escalante Desert sites, seem more appropriate to convert into an industrial solar site. For example, the Milford site is next to a hog farm, and contains powerlines and other disturbed lands. However, at the last minute, the Bureau of Land Management threw us for a loop. With little vetting, the agency’s preferred alternative for the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement will offer two million more acres for solar development, many of which are wilderness candidate areas. Working with a large team of conservation organizations, we hope to convince the Bureau of Land Management to make the Solar Energy Zone emphasized route the preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

- **One of Wild Utah Project’s strategies on the renewable energy front has been to engage in shaping Governor Herbert’s 10-Year Energy Strategy for Utah.**

At each opportunity, we advocate that renewable energy be a priority, but that any energy development keeps our remaining wild places intact and minimizes impacts on wildlife.

One of the most important things we can do to prepare wildlife and their habitat for a changing climate is to better connect their core habitat together through corridors and areas that have some human use but support the passage of wildlife.

Renewable energy is a rising opportunity in Utah. The potential for growth in this area is far greater than most other economic opportunities. It is our job to make certain that Utah invites development of renewable energy in a way that respects wild places. The good news is that there are options that should meet almost all our needs without the loss of important, natural places and without further diminishing our wildlife heritage.

### **Wildlands networks: The Importance of Connected and Conserved Landscapes in a time of Changing Climate**

Our work to protect wildlands and wildlife has real effects on the ground. For example, we have taken our roadless area surveys and wildland network designs to the decision-making process regarding where to site renewable energy in Utah, where to allow recreational vehicle use, and where to give priority to wildlife habitat protec-



Wild Utah Project’s Conservation Biologist Allison Jones presented “The Importance of Connected and Conserved Landscapes in a time of Changing Climate” at the annual Stegner Center Symposium in Salt Lake City. Photo: Amy O’Connor

tion. We do this because one of the most important things we can do to prepare wildlife and their habitat for a changing climate is to better connect their core habitat together through corridors and areas that have some human use but support the passage of wildlife. However, this is a concept that is sometimes hard to grasp and visualize for the lay person. Thus, Wild Utah Project is constantly engaging in public outreach on this important topic, often with partners such as Wildlands Network.

While Wild Utah Project has done dozens of public presentations over the years on the importance of habitat connectivity and wildlands networks, here is one example of our outreach on this topic. In March of 2010, Wild Utah Project's Conservation Biologist Allison Jones presented "The Importance of Connected and Conserved Landscapes in a time of Changing Climate" at the annual Stegner Center Symposium in Salt Lake City. This large symposium, held by the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources and the Environment at the University of Utah Law School, brings together distinguished speakers from across the country to speak on current environmental and conservation topics of import.

In her presentation, Allison explained the biological need for populations of wildlife to have interchange with other populations, sometimes over great distances. She explained why it is important to strive to maximize biodiversity and to preserve ecological relationships with interactive species, and why this needs to be done at the landscape level if we are to ensure the long-term survival of biological communities. She also explored the science, case studies and challenges behind the practice of connecting wildlife core areas together across the landscape via protected landscape linkages, and about the challenges of implementing wildland network designs on the ground.

The Stegner Symposium was very well received by this large and enthusiastic audience which had many questions that illustrated the lay public's increasing understanding of these complex issues. At Wild Utah Project, we believe that this increasing awareness and knowledge by the public is an essential element if we are to change land management practices for the long-term benefit of wildlands and wildlife. For more information, go to <http://ulaw.tv/collections/stegner-2010> and click on Allison's presentation at the symposium.



Artist's rendition of proposed wildlife overpass now being built over Interstate 70 near Vail pass in Colorado. Image courtesy of Center for Native Ecosystems



## Range Management Reform Program

*Promoting ecologically-based range management, a key part of our response to climate change*

### Precedent-Setting Grazing Decision Expected—The Duck Creek Appeal

About three years ago, we joined a number of conservation partners, ranchers, the Farm Bureau, the Forest Service and others to collaborate to solve grazing management problems in the Tushar Mountains east of Beaver. We jointly agreed on the nature of the problems, the kinds of monitoring and analysis we would conduct together, and how to work together to make decisions. The process has not been perfect, but significant progress has been made working together. This collaborative process cost the Forest Service about \$50,000.

#### 2010 Range Management Reform Program in a nutshell...

Growing up in the West has made us familiar with our deserts, sage steppe, and canyon streams and we have come to accept today's conditions as the norm. Most don't realize just how degraded many of our natural lands are. Rangeland reform needs to begin with raising an awareness of what the land should be at its ecological potential. Setting a goal to reach that potential requires assistance from land owners and land managers. Working with the conservation community, we strive to make significant progress on using rangeland monitoring protocols (ideally alongside ranchers and agency staff) that we can trust. In order to take this path, we need to move from belief-based range management to evidence-based management.



Wild Utah Project Executive Director Jim Catlin measures grass height at the Duck Creek grazing allotment. Wild Utah Project and Western Watersheds Project have collected data on the allotment for five years. Because of this work, for the first time, credible analysis of the data shows clearly and conclusively errors in BLM's methods and results. Photo: Allison Jones

The Bureau of Land Management has chosen a different route for the Duck Creek Allotment, east of Bear Lake in northern Utah. They have chosen not to collaborate with the conservation community and to directly challenge every piece of data we have supplied. This has cost the agency roughly three quarters of a million dollars and the decision they made three years ago is likely to be sent back by an appeals court to be fixed. This is the grazing permit decision for the Duck Creek Allotment and the appeal (now in its third year) will be the longest administrative hearing on record on a grazing decision! BLM has spent lots of money and seems to be losing this appeal.

We hope that the Duck Creek Allotment appeal will lead to a major change in how BLM manages grazing. In addition to challenging BLM's failure to include the public in decisions, we also have used our years of detailed field data on the allotment to challenge how they measure grazing forage utilization, assess riparian health, decide on how many livestock can graze, and assess whether rangeland health standards are being met. In Utah, BLM reports that out of approximately 1,400 grazing allotments only nine need changes in grazing management in order to improve. We know from our own personal experience, including a great deal of

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field data that we have collected across the state, that this is not so. You only need to look at riparian areas on most BLM lands to quickly see that there is a problem.

Typically in an administrative hearing before the Interior Board of Land Appeals,

the burden of proof falls on us, the appellant, who disagrees with a decision made by the BLM. BLM has decades of their own data and analysis that they use to support their conclusions about the health of our public rangelands. In these cases, the judge usually defers to the data and expertise of the agency and rules in their favor

To shift the burden of proof, we needed to collect data and produce credible analyses

that show clearly and conclusively errors in BLM's methods and results. We conducted detailed field work that took thousands of hours in the field over five years in order to challenge how BLM makes grazing decisions. The Duck Creek appeal is the first where we have had objective, verifiable field data that we can compare with

BLM's subjective expert opinions. For example, this is the first ever appeal in which an appellant has conducted detailed aerial counts of the actual number of livestock that are grazing the allotment. We then compared these

counts with BLM records which are based on rancher reported numbers of cattle. What our data showed is that BLM often does not know the exact amount of grazing that is actually taking place. If we prevail in this appeal, it is likely that BLM's assessment methods and the Duck Creek Allotment decision will be judged as arbitrary and returned to BLM with clear direction on how to fix it. This case reflects management problems we see in most BLM grazing allotments and if we win it could have a major effect on the BLM's entire grazing program.

This case reflects management problems we see in most BLM grazing allotments and if we win it could have a major effect on the BLM's entire grazing program.

Johnathan Ratner, who works for Western Watersheds Project, flies his powered paraglider to count cows at the Duck Creek grazing allotment. Evidence from cow counts is being used in the appeal of BLM's grazing management. Photo: Jim Catlin



## Kennecott Study: Answering questions regarding vegetation treatments on Sagebrush Ecosystems



Wild Utah Project Executive Director Jim Catlin and USDA/Agricultural Research Service collaborators at Kennecott Study site. Note the wildlife/cattle exclusion cage, used to gather data from ungrazed areas, in foreground. Photo: Amy O'Connor

only three that had an ungrazed control plot and studied the impacts of livestock grazing after the treatment. Put simply, we know very little about the long term effects of grazing after sagebrush is treated. That is why Wild Utah Project and its collaborators (Utah State University, the USDA-Agricultural Research Service in Logan, and Utah Kennecott Copper) in 2009 initiated a joint research effort to study sagebrush treatment projects and their interaction with post treatment livestock grazing, for the long term. Another relat-

In the last decade, over a million acres of western sagebrush rangelands, both on private and public lands, have been “treated” by mechanically removing sagebrush (or using other methods including chemical application or use of fire) and sometimes reseeding with nonnative species. A million more western acres are being proposed for such “treatment.” While BLM staff and many ranchers believe the treatments have a positive influence on the range, there is little scientific basis for that belief. In fact, it is largely unknown whether these treatments put some types of wildlife habitat at risk, reduce the resiliency of that habitat, or amplify the negative effects of climate change. This represents a hole in the published research of the field of restoration ecology.

The magnitude of this hole is evidenced by our recently completed literature review of studies conducted at western arid vegetation treatment sites after treatment. Out of 300 scientific studies on sagebrush and pinyon/juniper vegetation treatments conducted in the past fifty years, we have identified

Out of 300 scientific studies in the past 50 years, we have identified three that had an ungrazed control plot and studied the impacts of livestock grazing after the treatment. Put simply, we know very little about the long term effects of grazing after sagebrush is treated.

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ed goal of our study, which is now underway on Kennecott property, is to develop sustainable management techniques for sagebrush restoration sites.

In 2009 and again last year, the USDA-Agricultural Research Service in Logan donated staff time towards the initial benchmarking studies that recorded pre-treatment vegetation conditions at the Kennecott study site north of the Bingham copper mine on the east bench of the Oquirrh Mountains. State contractors finished “Dixie-harrowing” the eight separate 15-20 acre study plots

We hope that the data gathered through this project will help influence how millions of acres in the West are treated with regard to mechanical removal of sagebrush and the timing of livestock grazing afterwards.

last fall, meaning they mechanically removed much of the sagebrush. Reseeding followed with sagebrush and both native and non-native grasses and forbs. The rancher who grazes his cattle on Kennecott’s lands has been very cooperative throughout the process. Starting in either fall of 2012 or spring of 2013, cattle will be grazed on some of the study plots based on the research design. One third of the plots will have cattle brought back on after 2 years, one third after a pre-determined “natural plant community threshold” has been reached, and one third will not be grazed again.

One of the big hurdles Wild Utah Project needed to jump last year was funding. We are thankful that Kennecott provided \$50,000 to cover the cost of the fencing needed to enclose the various pastures that will have different combinations of sagebrush treatment and return times of cattle. We are also thankful to the R. Harold Burton Foundation for supporting this project and Utah Partners for Conservation Development who awarded the proposal written by Wild Utah Project with funds for the sagebrush treatment and reseeding.

Over the very long-term (over 20 years!), this study will deliver crucial data that fills a big hole in both the western grazing literature and rangeland restoration literature. We hope that the data gathered through this project will help influence how millions of acres in the West are treated with regard to removal of sagebrush and the timing of livestock grazing afterwards. The research could lead to far more ecologically sound range management that would benefit both grazing operations and wildlife habitat in the long run. We will keep you posted on this ground-breaking research that Wild Utah Project spearheaded!



## **Riparian Program**

*Ensuring that a biologically-based stream health method is used to determine the health of streams in Utah and elsewhere on the Colorado Plateau*

### **Taking the long view to create systemic change**

Our stream and riparian assessment effort perfectly fits with Wild Utah Project's larger vision of healthy, vibrant wildlands throughout the Colorado Plateau that support people and wildlife far into the future. Our Riparian Program has consisted of a series of steps that will lead to stream restoration across the Colorado Plateau. These steps have included

#### **2010 Riparian Program in a nutshell...**

Our studies show that healthy, resilient riparian areas continue to offer needed resources for wildlife and communities during drought periods. By assessing the health of streams across the Colorado Plateau and working with land managers and community leaders to improve them, we help make our streams and riparian areas more resilient in the face of droughts and increased temperatures.

- 1) **Developing a wildlife-based, scientifically sound riparian assessment method** (see <http://wildutahproject.org/programs/riparian/RSRA>). This tool, called the Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment (RSRA) method, which we developed with other scientists over the period from 2000-2005, was designed to identify problem streams in the Intermountain West and Southwest. It uses a series of simple but scientifically-based indicators that focus on wildlife needs to measure the biological health of streams. This method is objective, repeatable and can be used by anyone with some training.
- 2) **Conducting on-the-ground stream surveys that identify stream health** (Wild Utah Project and our partners have completed hundreds to date). We train teachers, ranchers, conservation partners, land managers, landowners, decision-makers and others in our stream assessment method such that they have the expertise to apply our assessment tool independently in locations across the Colorado Plateau.
- 3) **Creating a publicly accessible, on-line database for sharing survey results** broadly with conservation partners and decision-makers (see <http://wildutahproject.org/ripariansurvey/databaseform>).
- 4) **Advocating for adoption of a biological component in agency riparian assessments.** We continue to challenge Federal land managers to apply biological indicators, required by their own standards, in making ecological assessments. Our focus is on reforming riparian assessments for grazing decisions.
- 5) **Using the survey data to identify riparian areas in need of restoration.** Along with our partners, we identify priorities for restoration and develop collaborative, multi-stakeholder restoration work plans that will ensure future efforts to restore our Colorado Plateau streams.
- 6) **Identifying stressors in priority streams needing restoration.** In the case of the Duck Creek grazing allotment (see page 10 for details), our field data and analyses indicate that excessive livestock grazing is the key stressor that explains why ducks can no longer be found in Duck Creek.

7) **Working with partners in the restoration process to remove stressors that cause stream degradation.** One example of this is developing grazing practices that ensure that riparian conditions show significant improvement each year.

8) **Continuing to monitor streams that are subject to restoration efforts.**

For example, we are part of a collaborative process with the Escalante River Watershed Partnership that is focused on restoration through the removal of Russian olive trees, a damaging invasive species.

9) **Working to increase the use of the Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method across the Colorado Plateau,** through word of mouth, marketing, publishing, workshops, and growing the many cooperative partnerships we are already involved in. We are especially interested in convincing both private land owners and state and federal agencies, who have particular influence on which streams get assessed, to adopt our stream assessment method. We hope to slowly change how riparian assessments are conducted on western public lands such that the streams most in need of restoration are identified, restored and monitored.

\* \* \*

In 2010, Wild Utah Project and our partners in Utah and New Mexico conducted over thirty five stream surveys. The results of most of these have been entered into the online RSRA database. We also conducted two separate trainings last year. We held one 5-day training on the Virgin River in southern Utah. This training was tailored to the National Park Service employees at Zion National Park, other state and federal employees with focus on the Virgin River watershed, and local landowners and conservation groups. We conducted a second, 3-day training at the invitation of the Southwest Regional Office of the U.S. Forest Service for their employees, on local streams in the Sandias Mountains north of Albuquerque. We hope that this training sparks the use of our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method throughout the Southwest Region of the Forest Service (basically all national forests in New Mexico and Arizona).

The Army Corps of Engineers, southeast Arizona regional office, has directed the Pima County Department of Transportation to use our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method to assess all ephemeral and perennial streams that need to be assessed for the department's project mitigation measures.

Wild Utah Project's strengths include that we strategically apply the best conservation science to land management problems and that we take the long view. We understand that to create systemic change, we must persist in our efforts to expand the use of scientifically-based yet accessible tools such as our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method. Our ideas won't take



Allison Jones, Wild Utah Project Conservation Biologist, implements our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method. We are working towards broad use of this easy-to-use, yet scientifically sound tool to identify streams in need of restoration. Photo: Amy O'Connor

hold unless they are pursued over time. We are grateful to our many partners, including land management officials, who are working with us to implement our Riparian Program and to restore streams across the Colorado Plateau.

### Escalante River Watershed Partnership Moving Ahead

The National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy have formed the Escalante River Watershed Partnership with an initial priority to complete the removal of Russian olive trees from the Escalante River system. Check out Bill Wolverton's before and after photos here. Bill is a Park Service ranger who got this project started. His photos are also online for further documentation as to how this project has brought change to the canyons, allowing native vegetation like willows to return. The Escalante River Watershed Partnership

has blossomed and is making significant progress on watershed restoration and riparian ecosystem health. The Partnership has adopted our Rapid Stream and Riparian Assessment method as a key tool to measure progress. For more photos, please see Bill Wolverton's web site (<http://www.math.utah.edu/~sfolias/canyontales/wolverton/photojournal.php>).

### Arizona Department of Transportation Adopts Stream Assessment

Last summer we received the great news that the Army Corps of Engineers, southeast Arizona regional office, has directed the Pima County Department of Transportation to use Wild Utah Project's very own Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method to assess all ephemeral and perennial streams that need to be assessed for the department's project mitigation measures. This is a HUGE opportunity for Wild Utah Project and our burgeoning stream assessment protocol. It is also another example of how our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment is "snowballing" in the four corner states. We are now just beginning to figure out whether the Arizona Department of Transportation will need any modifications of the protocol for use in ephemeral streams, and when the first stream assessment training will be. We will keep you posted as this amazing development unfolds!



Before and after Russian olive tree removal on the Escalante River in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, just below Neon Canyon. Photos: Bill Wolverton.



## Off-road Vehicle Program

*Ensuring that ecosystem health and quiet user needs are central in ORV management*

### Program Overview

Wild Utah Project's Off-road Vehicle Program has consisted of four areas of work. These have included:

1) With our partner Wildlands CPR, we designed a consistent method to monitor off-road vehicle use and impacts, and to guide Forest Service travel plan revisions.

In 2008 we published Best Management Practices for Off-Road Vehicle Use on Forestlands – A Guide to Designating and Managing Off-Road Vehicle Routes (see <http://wildutahproject.org/resources> and choose this document).

2) We help our partners gather field data on ORV use and impacts in Utah forests.

3) With agency data and our field data, we analyze off-road vehicle use in the context of wildlife needs.

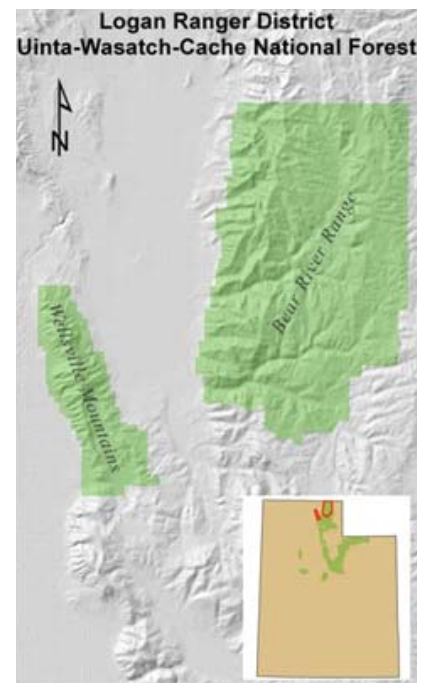
4) Based on our analysis and wildlife-based Best Management Practices, we advocate for the minimum off-road vehicle route system on national forests that meets wildlife habitat needs.

### U.S. Forest Service Likely To use Wild Utah Project's ORV Best Management Practices in their "Comprehensive Framework for Off-Highway Vehicle Trail Management"

Between 1993 and 2008, the number of off-highway vehicle users in the West rose from three million to more than ten million. This explosion in use has caused serious problems for wildlife, quiet forest users, and land managers. As early as 2003, then Forest Service Chief Bosworth indicated that unmanaged recreation was one of the four "great issues" facing the Forest Service. Some eight years later, the problems with unmanaged recreation such as off-road vehicle use have only intensified.

### 2010 Off-road Vehicle Program in a nutshell...

Wild Utah Project pushes for widespread use of the guidelines for off-road vehicle monitoring and management that we co-created with Wildlands CPR as a set of Best Management Practices. With increasing off-highway vehicle use in the West, we believe use of these Best Management Practices could significantly reduce the impacts to wildlife as well as quiet user needs.



Wild Utah Project's efforts on the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest are representative of our continuing work to ensure that the protection of wildlife is a priority in ORV management decisions. Photo/Map: Emanuel Vásquez

To make matters worse, the Forest Service lacked an adequate set of Best Management Practices to provide guidance in the management of off-road vehicle use. That is why in 2008, Wild Utah Project and our partner organization Wildlands CPR published Best Management Practices for Off-Road Vehicle Use on

It now appears that the U.S. Forest Service is considering the use of Wild Utah Project's and Wildland CPR's off-road vehicle Best Management Practices in their guidance document for Forest Service staff across the country.

Forestlands. We distributed this widely within the Forest Service and among other land managers and conservation organizations in hopes of providing a rational and science-based set of off-road vehicle management guidelines for forestlands. Our Best Management Practices were designed to be a resource for public land management agency staff, law enforcement officials, and citizens groups aiding in travel plan decisions on off-road vehicle use on forested lands. These Best Management Practices provide scientifically based tools to assess off-road vehicle impacts on soils, vegetation, wildlife, special ecosystems such as riparian areas and wetlands. Offering decision criteria in each of these focus areas, our Best Management Practices guide the decision-maker through planning, implementation and monitoring.

It now appears that the U.S. Forest Service is considering the use of Wild Utah Project's and Wildland CPR's off-road vehicle Best Management Practices in their guidance document for Forest Service staff across the country. If the Forest Service uses our document, our scientifically-based recommendations may influence off-road vehicle management decisions on national forests nation-wide! See the Forest Service's draft of the "Comprehensive Framework for Off-Highway Vehicle Trail Management" ([http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/php/library\\_card.php?p\\_num=1123%202804](http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/php/library_card.php?p_num=1123%202804)) and check out Appendix D.

### **California ORV Lawsuit Victorious: Intensive ORV Literature Review for our California Partners Plays Role in Success**

Wild Utah Project played a small but important part in a recent legal ruling on 25 million acres of the California Mojave Desert concerning off-road vehicle use. Our role involved updating the scientific knowledge of the plaintiffs' contest of the Bureau of Land Management's designation of 5,098 miles of off-road vehicle routes in the West Mojave Desert Management Plan. We updated their outdated literature review of studies showing impacts of ORVs on desert environments, adding 198 studies to their literature review. The plaintiffs included Alliance for Responsible Recreation, The Wilderness Society, Friends of Juniper Flats, Western San Bernardino Landowners Association, California Native Plant Society and Community ORV Watch. Judge Susan Illston in the U.S. District Court in San Francisco ruled that BLM's decision violated several federal laws. We hope that the lessons learned in this ruling will help us here in Utah.



## **Conservation Community Support**

*Helping our conservation partners accomplish their wildland and wildlife protection work*

### **Development with a Vision: Progressive Ranch Adopts Ecological Assessments**

During the summer and fall of 2010, the Wolf Creek Ranch Homeowner's Association approached Wild Utah Project to conduct ecological assessments of the upper Provo River as well as the aspen stands located on the ranch. Wolf

Creek Ranch is a 14,000 acre community near Kamas, Utah, carved into 84 parcels of 160 acres a piece. Situated on top of a high alpine plateau and encompassing a portion of the upper Provo River, this stunning piece of land offers endless views of the neighboring Wasatch and Uinta Mountain Ranges, unique high alpine aspen communities and a thriving big game wildlife population including elk, deer and moose herds. With a strong commitment to conservation, Wolf Creek Ranch has placed 95% of the 14,000 acres under a conservation easement, ensuring its beauty and environment will be maintained and enjoyed for generations to come.

In an effort to be stewards of the land, Wolf Creek Ranch recently formed an Environmental Preservation and Ecodiversity Committee (EPEC). Acknowledging the importance of minimizing the ecological impact associated with developing over 26 miles of paved roads and up to 83 building sites, EPEC is committed to ensuring the natural beauty of the Ranch is preserved, the wildlife habitats are enhanced and the ecological integrity of the land is maintained. Home sites are limited to a 10 acre envelope on each 160 acre lot. Fences are rare, and where allowed, are environmentally and wildlife friendly.

The committee approached Wild Utah Project last summer to conduct ecological assessments of the stream and riparian environment. Towards the end of summer, Wild Utah Project staff used our Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment method to assess the segment of the Provo River that passes through the Wolf Creek Ranch property. We found that this stretch of the Provo is, overall, functioning well, with a few minor impacts associated with overbrowsing by deer in the riparian corridor. Wolf Creek Ranch was happy to receive our final report on the assessment and will use the results and our recommendations as they make decisions about managing Wolf Creek Ranch's riparian habitat. Wolf Creek Ranch also shared our report with nearby private landowners along the Provo River.

Following the river assessment, Wolf Creek Ranch once again invited Wild Utah Project, this time to conduct an aspen health and regeneration survey at the Ranch in October. The decline of aspen throughout the West, due to lack of recruitment

#### **2010 Conservation Community Support in a nutshell...**

Wild Utah Project continues to provide scientific services to the conservation community. We apply the principles of conservation biology in science and GIS (Geographic Information Service) analysis to assist our partners. Among other things, our services help our partners understand largely cryptic agency data and analysis.

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through root regeneration, is currently a major concern. There are many theories as to why they are declining. Second only to riparian areas, aspen stands are among the most productive habitats in western ecosystems. Aspen play a disproportionately important role in maintaining ecosystem function, because they interact particularly strongly with numerous other plant species as well as many species of wildlife, such as sapsuckers and woodpeckers. The ramifications of aspen decline are amplified by the key role aspen play in the stability and integrity of watershed slopes.



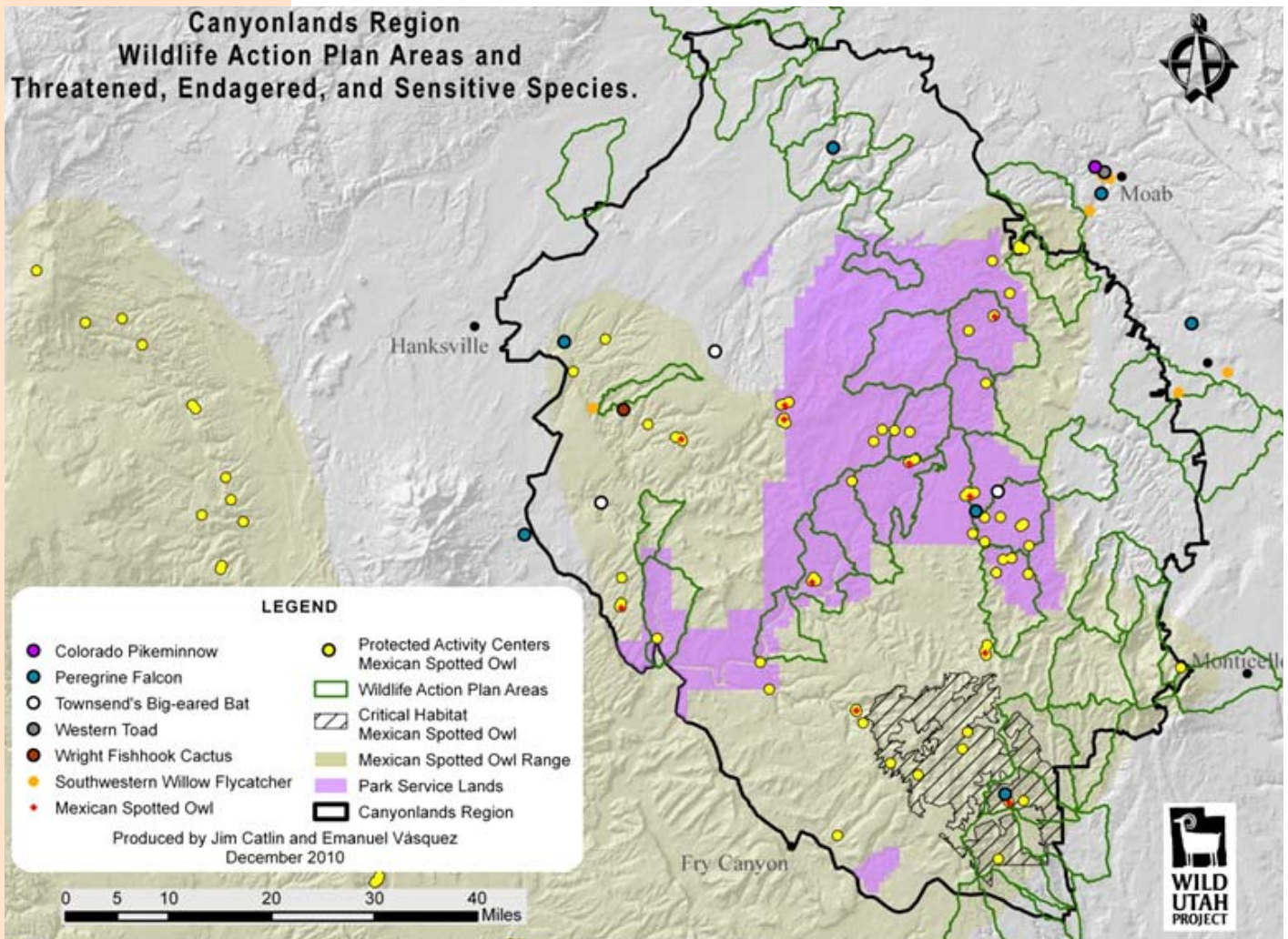
As part of our aspen health and regeneration survey, we conducted an aspen survey training session for residents and landowners of Wolf Creek Ranch, using a protocol developed by Grand Canyon Trust and endorsed by the U.S Forest Service in a seminal report released by Utah State University last year entitled “Guidelines for aspen restoration on the National Forests in Utah.” In the training for the Wolf Creek land owners, we assessed four separate aspen stands for health and regeneration. Wolf Creek Ranch intends to use these surveys as baseline data as they make some management decisions and consider active restoration treatments on their “at risk” aspen stands.

Wild Utah Project  
Executive Director Jim  
Catlin and Conservation  
Biologist Allison Jones  
discuss the Rapid Stream  
Riparian Assessment at  
Wolf Creek Ranch.  
Photo: Amy O'Connor

Through our involvement last year, Wild Utah Project became part of a larger partnership, including Wolf Creek Ranch, Utah State University, Western Aspen Alliance, Utah Open Lands, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Utah Watershed Restoration initiative, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and the Utah Department of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. Together, this partnership will design the management changes, aspen treatments and follow-up research on the Ranch over the next several years. All of us at Wild Utah Project are excited to see developers and landowners with a vision to maintain healthy ecosystems. We hope that others will follow in the path of Wolf Creek Ranch – using scientific studies to determine the best path for managing streams, aspen and other resources on private lands. We will keep you posted on our new partnership with these visionary land owners.

Following are brief descriptions of some of the other projects the Wild Utah Project completed for or with our conservation partners last year:

- **National monument trespass:** A little more than a year ago, a 2000 square-foot home was built without permission inside a Wilderness Study Area in BLM's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, just east of Escalante near Pine Creek which drains into the Escalante River. Wild Utah Project's executive director Jim Catlin wrote a story about this issue which was published in the Sierra Club newsletter. We've been tracking this issue on behalf of the Utah Wilderness Coalition, and the BLM has yet to take action to correct the trespass.



Wild Utah Project created this GIS map for Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance's work to close renegade off-road vehicle routes around Canyonlands National Park. The map helps describe the ecological importance and biological uniqueness of the "Greater Canyonlands Region" in Southern Utah. Map: Emanuel Vásquez and Jim Catlin.

- **Support of campaign to close renegade off-road vehicle routes:** Late last year the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance asked for our help to do GIS analysis and describe the ecological importance and biological uniqueness of the “Greater Canyonlands Region” surrounding Canyonlands National Park in southern Utah. Our report, which is instrumental in Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance’s kicking off of a recent campaign to close renegade off-road vehicle routes around the periphery of the park, can be found on their website at <http://dev.suwa.org/wp-content/uploads/GreaterCanyonlandsEcologicalValues.pdf>
- **Sharing wilderness inventory methods:** Last year Executive Director Jim Catlin attended the Western Wilderness Conference and presented the methods we developed to inventory candidate wilderness areas. These are the same methods that the Utah Wilderness Coalition used in its detailed wilderness survey of BLM lands in Utah, and which resulted in the Red Rock Wilderness bill now in Congress.



- **Speaking up for Coyotes:** This past winter, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife tried to push an item on their agenda on the Utah Wildlife Board and Division of Wildlife Resources: **this time to extend the length of time that trappers have between checking non-lethal traps from 48 hours to a whole week!**

Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife argues that if trappers can have more lee-way and set traps one weekend and check them the next, there will be more chance of killing more coyotes. They justify their proposal by claiming that coyotes are one of the chief causes for a major decline in Utah’s deer herds. There were numerous problems with their proposal, including: there is no connection

between length of trapping session and the number of animals trapped (which may include non-target species); the claim that there is a major decline in Utah deer herds is simply false (the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources points out that deer herds in the state have varied between stable to a very slight decline in numbers over the past decade); leaving animals to suffer in a leg-hold trap for nearly seven days is unethical and inhumane.

Wild Utah Project helped turn out a large number of conservationists to the Wildlife Board meeting that was to decide whether to accept Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife’s proposal. Thanks to our outcry and the fact that the Division of Wildlife Resources itself was against the proposal, the Wildlife Board voted down the proposal and the mandatory trap check period remains at 48 hours. Go to our media page (<http://wildutahproject.org/media>) to see a news clip on this story and other news clips featuring Wild Utah Project staff.

Coyote with two paws in leg-hold-trap. In Fiscal Year 2009, the federal agency Wildlife Services alone (formerly Animal Damage Control) killed 81,711 coyotes nationwide. Of these, 6,182 coyotes were caught using leg-hold-traps similar to the one pictured here. The other coyotes were killed using various tools including: firearms, M-44 cyanide capsules, gas cartridges, fixed wing, helicopters, foot/leg snares, neck snares, body grip traps, and cages. Taxpayer dollars continue to be used in this relentless killing of wildlife. Thankfully, the Utah Wildlife Board has voted down the proposal to extend the animals’ suffering in leghold traps from 48 hours to an entire week when caught in Utah’s traps. Photo: Internet trapper forum where captures and kills are posted.

## The Road Ahead

Wild Utah Project fills a conservation niche that doesn't see the limelight very often. The work that we do, often in collaboration with our many partners, is the stuff of research and analysis that happens behind the scenes. It involves our long-term study of how to conduct ecologically responsible livestock grazing while minimizing impacts to the land and wildlife. It means collaborating with agencies and individuals who may not completely share our

The work that we do, often in collaboration with our many partners, is the stuff of research and analysis that happens behind the scenes. ...we feel that our work may be less than glamorous, but it is essential work that provides one of the pillars that helps support the conservation movement and our ultimate aim to protect the full diversity of wildlife and habitat.



Fall colors in the Wasatch Range. Photo: © Howie Garber

world view, but who are willing to take the risk of jointly trying to find real solutions to hard problems like how to monitor and control off-road vehicle use or how to ensure that wildlife corridors allow for our continued co-existence with the other species who share our world. Our work means that we need to look three steps ahead to make sure that we do renewable energy right, by first considering siting options in already degraded lands (e.g., brownfields), fully utilizing options in the built environment of cities and towns, and minimizing impacts of renewable energy development on our still natural lands.

Our work that you support ensures that we engage with on-the-ground land management issues in a way that provides real, tangible, easy-to-use tools that help us protect and improve our degraded streams, increase the resilience of our wildlands, and allow for natural processes like wildlife migration to continue into the future. And sometimes, it means challenging how the land management agencies have done things for decades and shining the light of solid conservation science and sound empirical evidence on the issues at hand, while working with those in the agencies who share our understanding of the

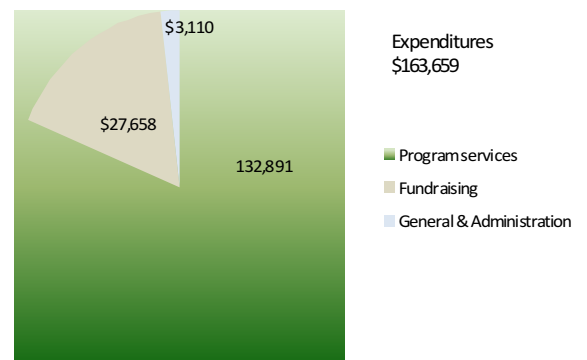
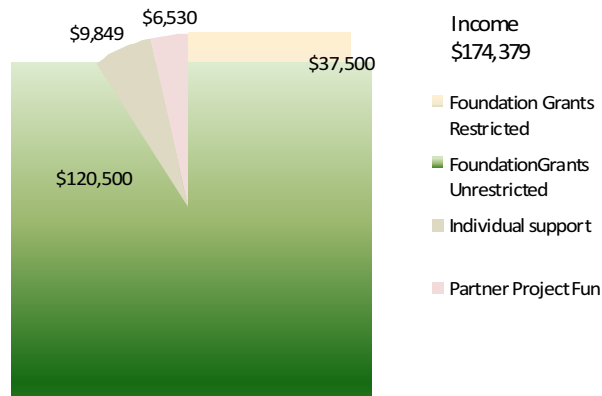
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need for implementing conservation biology in the real world. In addition, we continue to support good land managers, scientists, and conservation partners who are working hard to do land management right by considering not only people's interests, but also the well being of both wildlife and wildlands.

At Wild Utah Project, we feel that our work may be less than glamorous, but it is essential work that provides one of the pillars that helps support the conservation movement and our ultimate aim to protect the full diversity of wildlife and habitat. Changes in land management may not come easily, but Wild Utah Project will continue to bring sound conservation science to the effort to reform land management as we know it today. And on that front, we are making progress. Thanks again to all of our partners and supporters for moving us forward in our work to protect, and where needed, restore the health of our lands in Utah and surrounding states!



### 2010 Wild Utah Project Income and Expenses



## Wild Utah Project Staff

**Wendy Bates** worked as a GIS Analyst for the Wild Utah Project from June 2003 to July 2011. After earning a B.S. in Geography with a GIS emphasis from the University of Utah in 2002, she was employed collecting GIS field data and later as a Quality Assurance supervisor for Pacificorp. This entailed use of a GPS unit in conjunction with a variety of field data collection equipment and methods, a number of which she employed to the benefit of the conservation community. At Wild Utah Project, Wendy worked on GIS analyses and mapping projects associated with a multitude of public land issues including land use plan revisions, off-road vehicle use, roadless inventories and wilderness proposals. She most recently completed Wild Utah Project's lynx least-cost corridor analysis, a habitat suitability and connectivity model identifying priority lands for conservation of habitat in an effort to restore lynx connectivity between southern Colorado and the greater Yellowstone region. She also assisted with our day-to-day computer information technology issues and GIS technology upgrades. Last summer, Wendy left Wild Utah Project to go back to her home in Idaho. We appreciate her many years with Wild Utah Project and miss her!



**Jim Catlin**, executive director (who also serves on the Wild Utah Project board) and native Utahan, has been active in public land issues for more than 25 years. His PhD from the University of California at Berkeley focused on GIS and land use planning. His MS in regional land use planning at the University of Utah analyzed Wasatch Front air quality. In 1996 under the guidance of The Wildlands Project, Jim founded the Wild Utah Project to support the work of other Utah conservation activists. In addition to overseeing data collection and analysis necessary for reserve design projects in Utah, Jim provides GIS support and scientific analysis. Jim is widely recognized as one of the principle architects of the present day conservation movement in Utah. His awards include the Alexis Kelner Award from the Wasatch Mountain Club, John Muir Award, the Sierra Club's highest conservation award, and the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance Conservation Award. Jim served on the Sierra Club Board of Directors for six years.



**Allison Jones** received her B.A. in Environmental Studies at the University of California at Santa Cruz under the guidance of her mentor and advisor, Michael Soule. She then completed her M.S. in



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Conservation Biology at the University of Nevada, Reno in 1996. Her Masters study analyzed the effects of cattle grazing on small mammal communities in the Great Basin. She then worked as an ecological consultant in both Colorado and Utah as an endangered species specialist, where she performed habitat assessments and surveys for federally threatened birds, small mammals and plants. As staff conservation biologist for The Wild Utah Project, Allison collects and assembles biological data to be used in reserve design for Utah. Allison also provides biological analyses for Utah conservation groups that do not typically have these services in-house. Examples include detailed conservation biology analyses of proposed federal land management agency plans and actions. Allison served the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources as a member on two state task forces: one to rewrite Utah's black bear management plan, and another to write Utah's first wolf conservation and management plan.



**Amy O'Connor** joined the Wild Utah Project in April 2009. Amy came to the nonprofit world with bachelor's and master's degrees in biology from the University of Utah. For eight years (1988-1996), she served as Membership Director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. During this time, the membership grew from 1,000 to over 20,000, while Amy worked on membership recruitment, retention and upgrade. For six years of her tenure at Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Amy was the publisher and managing editor of the organization's newsletter and other outreach materials. In 1997, Amy began full time work for Integrated Development Consulting, Inc., which she established and where she built the financial and organizational stability of nonprofits through training, facilitation and coaching. Her areas of expertise include comprehensive development planning, strategic planning, donor stewardship, board development, membership recruitment and cultivation, and communication.

**Emanuel Vásquez** joined the staff of Wild Utah Project in December as our new GIS Analyst. We are excited to welcome Emanuel who is originally from Guatemala and recently moved to the United States where he calls Utah his home. He has been working for the last ten years in many conservation efforts that include the creation of a municipal park and the preservation of 82,000 acres of forestland in the Highlands of Guatemala, including 9 of the country's 23 volcanoes. His work with municipal governments, central government, small communities, and private lands owners gave him the opportunity to coordinate and mediate for the preservation of public and private lands threatened with conversion into agricultural fields. Emanuel is quick to point out that he feels "very fortunate to have worked in conservation in Guatemala and to be able to continue this work in the United States." His previous work with the Ministry of Agriculture in Guatemala helped him to develop skills in



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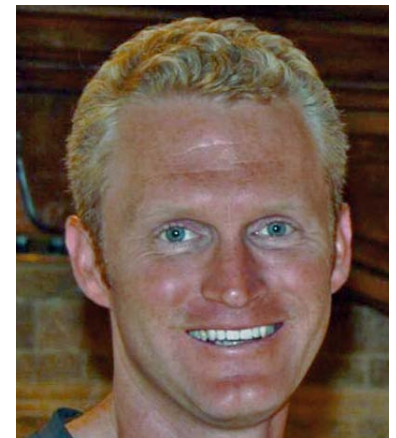
the use of GPS units and GIS for land surveying, mapping, and inventory of natural resources for the purpose of conservation. He has earned an Associate's degree in Forestry from the National School of Agriculture in Guatemala and a B.S. in Business by Galileo University Guatemala. More recently he has been studying at the University of Utah, applying for the certificate in GIS with emphasis in Remote Sensing. He is thrilled to be part of Wild Utah Project where he can put to work his great passion for Geography and Conservation while contributing to the preservation of wildlands in the beautiful state of Utah as well as surrounding states.

### **Wild Utah Project Board of Directors**

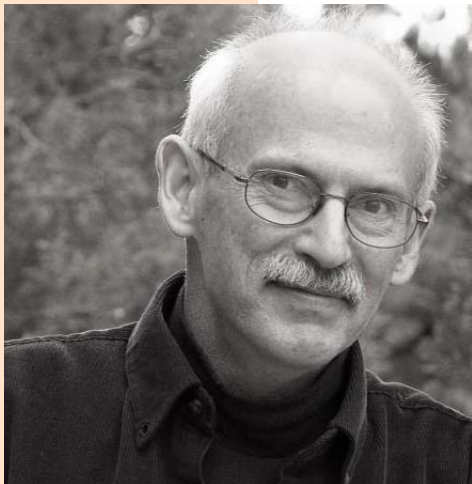


**Jeff Kessler** is a long time conservation activist, working as paid staff, board member, and volunteer for organizations protecting wildlife and wild places in Wyoming, Colorado, South Dakota and Utah. Jeff is co-founder and was for many years Executive Director of Biodiversity Conservation Alliance (Laramie, WY). Jeff was a board member of the Wyoming Outdoor Council (Lander, WY) for ten years and the Center for Native Ecosystems (Denver, CO) for four years. He also was a steering committee member of the Southern Rockies Conservation Alliance for many years. Jeff's conservation interests include the application of conservation science and GIS to federal land and wildlife management, protection of imperiled native species, and the protection of natural areas. After nearly 25 years in Wyoming, Jeff now resides in Salt Lake City, UT where he is employed by the University of Utah as a mechanical engineer.

**Jeremy Lund** is the Manager for XIII, LLC; a diversified family holding company. He is also the Treasurer of the Lund Foundation, a founding member of the Community Foundation of Utah, serves as Board Chairman for Recycle Utah, on the boards of Wild Utah Project, David Eccles School of Business UUBAA and TNC-Utah Gen C. Prior to his current employment, Mr. Lund worked for JP Morgan (New York), DLJ International (London) and American Stores Company (Salt Lake City, UT). He graduated from the University of Utah Magna Cum Laude and received his MBA from Harvard Business School. On a personal level, Jeremy is an active participant in triathlon completing an Ironman in 2008 and enjoys travel and time with his family.



**William Newmark** is a research curator and conservation biologist in the Utah Museum of Natural History. He holds a B.A. in biology from the University of Colorado, a M.S. in wildland management from the University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. in ecology from the University of Michigan. His research is focused on patterns of extinction of vertebrate species, protected area and wildlife corridor design, vertebrate species movement, and conservation and development. He has been conducting field research for over twenty years in western North America and East Africa. His findings on patterns of extinction of large mammals in western North American and Tanzanian parks and birds on tropical forest fragments have highlighted the problems that nature reserves face in conserving biological diversity and have provided an important justification for a series of worldwide initiatives to link national parks and related reserves with wildlife corridors. He also serves as an international consultant in conservation biology to a number of bilateral and multilateral donor organizations and has been a planner and a technical adviser on a number of conservation projects in East Africa.



**Stephen Trimble** was born in Denver, his family's base for roaming the West with his geologist father. After a liberal arts education at Colorado College, he worked as a park ranger in Colorado and Utah, earned a master's degree in ecology at the University of Arizona, served as director of the Museum of Northern Arizona Press, and for five years lived in Indian Country near Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has been a full-time free-lance writer and photographer since 1981. Trimble has received significant awards for his photography, his non-fiction, and his fiction—and the breadth of those awards mirrors the wide embrace of his work: The Sierra Club's Ansel Adams Award for photography and conservation; The National Cowboy Museum's Western Heritage Award; and a Doctor of Humane Letters from his alma mater, Colorado College, honoring his efforts to increase our understanding of Western landscapes and peoples and his choice to remain a stubborn generalist. Trimble has published twenty books, almost all focused on western wildlands and natural history. One of those books Trimble co-compiled with Terry Tempest Williams was a landmark effort by writers that played an important influence on public policy on Utah's canyon country.









## Wild Utah Project's Mission

The Mission of Wild Utah Project is to protect and, where needed, restore the health of our lands in Utah and surrounding states. Based on an undisputable body of evidence, there is a common consensus that we face an ecological crisis beyond any in recorded history. Climate change on top of our growing human population, with its expanding demands on our landscapes, has led to large-scale habitat fragmentation, loss of watershed health and land productivity. This fact is not just an abstract scientific theory but a conclusion that is important to our lives. Healthy ecosystems will be most resilient to coming climate shifts. Furthermore, the health of the land is a fundamental trust we all have responsibility for that is eventually linked to almost all human endeavors. Damaged ecosystems jeopardize not only wildlife but the continued existence of rural communities.

A bold new vision is needed to address this ecological situation. Conservation biology has taught us that in order to maintain biological richness and ecological processes across the landscape, it is necessary to design and implement landscape-level wildland networks, comprised of roadless core areas connected by habitat linkages. Proper management of these networks can ensure the viability and resilience of wildlife populations and the health of wildlife habitat for the long term. Together with other scientists and our conservation partners, an important part of Wild Utah Project's mission is to create and implement wildland networks for Utah's diverse landscapes.

The Wild Utah Project works productively with many people in the scientific community to provide ecological research and GIS support for the conservation community in Utah and surrounding states. Such an assistance program provides a framework to help shape land use in a way that restores native wildlife (including large carnivores), maintains ecological integrity, expands wilderness, protects biodiversity, and provides for ecosystem resilience.

Want more information? Here are some web sites to visit:

-  Riparian users guide - <http://wildutahproject.org/resources>
-  Heart of the West Conservation Plan and other Wild Utah Project publications - <http://wildutahproject.org>
-  Tushar Collaborative Group - <http://tushar.ecr.gov/>
-  Three Forests Coalition - <http://threeforests.org/>  
(Dixie, Fishlake and Manti-La Sal National Forests)
-  Western Governors' Association, wildlife corridors - <http://www.westgov.org/wga/initiatives/corridors/index.htm>
-  Off-Road Vehicle Management, Best Management Practices - <http://wildutahproject.org/resources>