

2018 Impact Report



WILD UTAH PROJECT



*2018 Beaver Dam Analogue field day
photo courtesy of Lindsay Aman*

SCIENCE IN SERVICE OF WILDLIFE AND WILDLANDS

At Wild Utah Project, we strive toward the best outcomes for wildlife and their habitats by collaborating with municipal, state, and federal agencies, fellow nonprofit partners, and community scientists. We bring fundamental conservation science principles, scientific literature, and the expertise to fill data gaps that inform wildlife and wildland management decisions.

With climate change, energy development, and a lack of scientific data to inform policy threatening Utah's wildlife and natural landscapes, it is now more important than ever that our community comes

together to ensure that our public resources are sustained for many generations to come.

We look forward to a future in which we base management decisions on values arising from real ecological thresholds and biological needs and not politics. We intend to be part of the equation defining those thresholds and needs. We believe that by pooling our resources and engaging community scientists, we can all work together to create an enduring legacy for Utah's wildlife and wildlands.

Allison Jones



Conservation
Organizations



Community Science
Volunteers



Government
Agencies

Our
Partners



Academic
Institutions



COMMUNITY SCIENCE

Wild Utah Project is unique among conservation organizations in offering hands-on experience for fellow community members. Leveraging community science volunteers in collecting data is a win-win for local stakeholders and resource management agencies alike. We believe that when individuals are engaged in science-based data collection in their community, they become life-long stewards of wildlife and habitat.

Last year, individuals from all backgrounds learned scientific methods and protocols that enabled them to contribute to existing data and overall knowledge about native species and their habitats. Without community scientists, projects like the Wasatch Wildlife Watch, Riparian and Stream Restoration, and Amphibian and Aquatic Habitat Assessments would not be possible. These data, collected by community scientists, provide critical information to our government agency partners who create policy that directly benefits Utah's natural resources.

*2018 RSRA field training
photo courtesy of Janice Gardner*

COMMUNITY SCIENCE KEY STATS



117 volunteers contributed **2213** hours for Wasatch Wildlife Watch (pg. #9)



4 volunteers contributed **246** hours for data analytics and office support



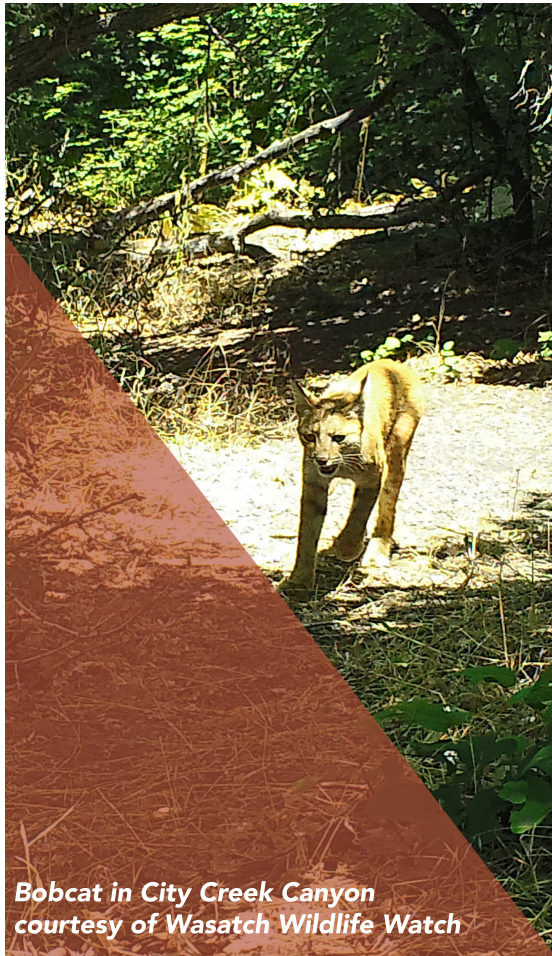
35 volunteers contributed **550** hours for Amphibian and Aquatic Habitat Assessments (pg. #6)



29 volunteers contributed **508** hours for Stream and Riparian Restoration (pg. #7)

In 2018:

185 volunteers contributed **3,517** hours



WILDLIFE SCIENCE

At Wild Utah Project, we value the use of science-based information in making decisions affecting wildlife. We conduct original research and field monitoring for native wildlife species. We also engage in landscape-level planning processes to ensure that wildlife corridors, migration routes, and habitat connections are identified, maintained, and improved.

We partner with non-profit conservation organizations, academicians, and governmental agencies to provide much-needed data to inform science-based wildlife management and conservation decisions. We share our findings with the community through reports, presentations, peer-reviewed research publications, and professional conferences.

*Bobcat in City Creek Canyon
courtesy of Wasatch Wildlife Watch*

AMPHIBIAN AND AQUATIC HABITAT ASSESSMENTS

Our goal is to improve and sustain the overall health of Utah's alpine aquatic ecosystems. An important indicator of aquatic health is the presence of the boreal toad, once common in Utah's mountains. The boreal toad is listed as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Utah's Wildlife Action Plan and listed as "sensitive" by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. For this reason, we partner with the habitat and wildlife decision-makers at Utah's Division of Wildlife Resources and the US Forest Service, the providers of geologic and environmental data at Utah's Geological Survey, conservation partners at Utah's Hogle Zoo, and community science volunteers to collect information about frog and toad eggs, tadpoles and adults along with water quality data.

These data are logged into a statewide spatial database that will inform predictive models to assess aquatic resources and relative habitat function. Predictive models will help identify potential reintroduction sites for the vulnerable boreal toad to avoid the species being listed as a federally threatened or endangered species.

KEY STATS

35

Volunteers

550

Volunteer
hours

18

Surveys

4

Partner
organizations



Boreal toad photo courtesy of Diane Menuz

STREAM AND RIPARIAN RESTORATION

Our goal is to create climate adapted watersheds resulting in connected riparian corridors, resilient wildlife populations, and thriving communities. As climate change continues to warm the West, streams can dry out earlier each year and vegetation productivity often declines, with further implications for wildlife and residents. The symptoms of climate change are amplified by degraded stream conditions arising from overgrazing and extirpation of beaver.

Low-tech, process-based restoration, like beaver dam mimicry, can help watersheds adapt to climate change. We partner with the habitat and wildlife stewards and decision-makers at Utah's Division of Wildlife Resources, the researchers publishing novel literature on riparian and beaver habitat restoration at Utah State University, the nonprofit partners focused on stream and riparian habitat restoration at Trout Unlimited, and community science volunteers to conduct assessments of stream conditions and to build beaver dam analogues. These human constructed beaver dams raise water tables, increase water retention in ponds, and encourage the release of water over longer dry periods. This improves water quality, conserves biodiversity and habitat, provides recreation opportunities, absorbs floodwaters, and aids wildfire habitat recovery.



*2018 Beaver Dam Analogue field day
photo courtesy of Lindsay Aman*

EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES



Beaver photo courtesy of Carol Orr

Rapid Stream-Riparian Assessments generate a score for stream water quality, riparian vegetation, and hydrogeomorphology as well as fish, aquatic, and terrestrial wildlife habitat. This method efficiently assesses stream condition and monitors the effectiveness of restoration activities. By comparing pre-stream restoration scores to post-restoration scores, we are documenting that restoration efforts are working as intended. We house, share, and maintain these compiled data using a centralized database to understand restoration efforts on a landscape level.

KEY STATS

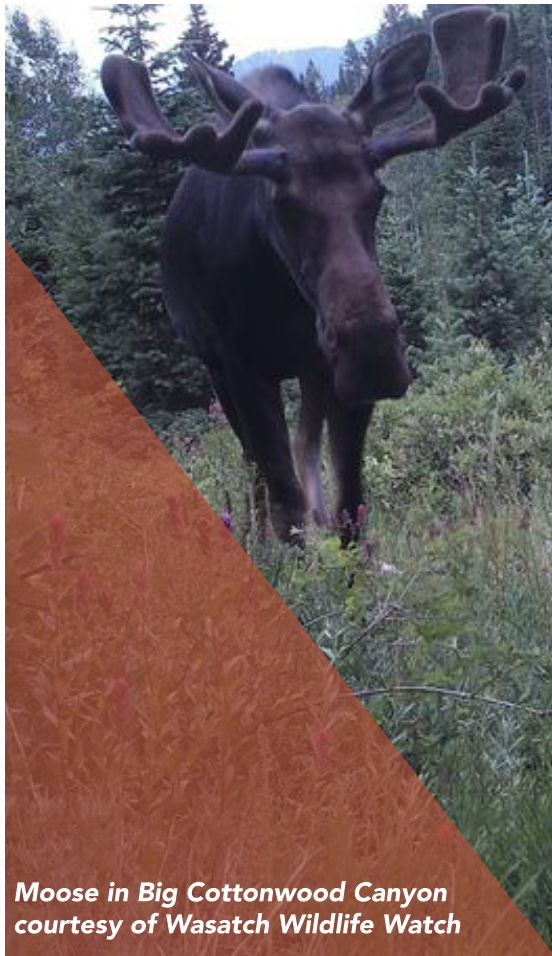
29
Volunteers

508
Volunteer hours

18
Stream surveys/
assessments

28
Beaver Dam
Analogues

3
Partner
organizations



WASATCH WILDLIFE WATCH

Our goal is to assess wildlife presence in areas where wildlife habitat meets growing urban development. Increased recreation and a booming human population are putting pressure on the Wasatch Mountain's natural resources. With urban population in the Wasatch predicted to expand 40% through the next 25 years, the Central Wasatch Commission—the entity tasked with preserving the Central Wasatch through transportation planning—has found there is a lack of baseline wildlife data to inform future planning.

2018 was the first year of a five-year study to collect wildlife habitat use and occupancy on the landscape. We partner with researchers at the University of Utah's Biodiversity and Conservation Ecology Lab, Salt Lake City Trails & Natural Lands, science program directors at the Natural History Museum of Utah, and community science volunteers, to collect and analyze wildlife images in the Central Wasatch Mountains using motion activated trail cameras. These images will enable us to better understand influences of human development and recreational traffic on wildlife habitat. These data will be used to create a predictive spatial model to inform future landscape-level planning decisions that maintain or improve habitat connectivity for wildlife movement, benefitting both residents and wildlife.

*Moose in Big Cottonwood Canyon
courtesy of Wasatch Wildlife Watch*

EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES



Wildlife occurrence data from the 2018 field season has already demonstrated the importance of connected and protected habitats as well as wild-urban-interface areas for the movement of large predators. For example: close to 80% of the mountain lion detections occurred in the Red Butte Natural Area and City Creek Canyon. This type of information allows us to better understand how native species use the wild-urban-interface and where important points of habitat connectivity and movement may be improved or maintained.

KEY STATS

117
Volunteers

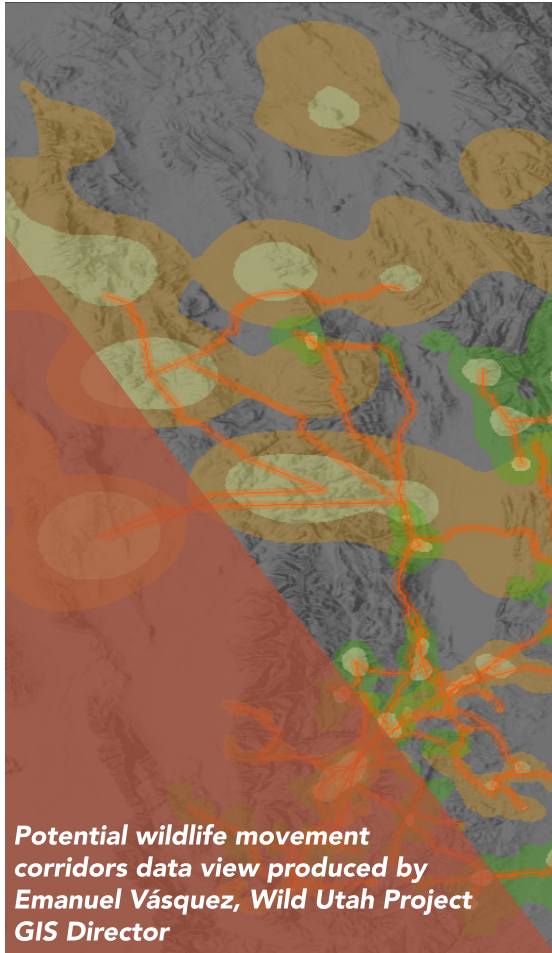
2,213
Volunteer hours

3
Survey rotations

68
Camera stations

400,000
Trail camera
images

3
Partner
organizations



PARTNER SUPPORT

We offer and provide ecological and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services to the community. Our staff has extensive expertise in large-scale conservation assessments, data analytics, and computerized mapping that provide community clients with data to better inform decision making that benefit wildlife and habitat.

Because our work is rooted in objective conservation science, we value the highest ethical and professional standards in all of the projects we select. We only select projects that further our mission to provide science-based strategies for wildlife and land conservation. Likewise, we work with community clients that share our commitment to wildlife and habitat conservation. Our community clients include government agencies tasked with land and wildlife management in addition to fellow conservation nonprofits and independent researchers working to improve or maintain conditions for wildlife and habitat.

GIS :

IDENTIFYING WILDLIFE MOVEMENT IMPEDANCE AREAS

We teamed up with Yellowstone to Uintas Connection to facilitate wildlife migration improvements on the landscape in the face of habitat degradation and climate change. The Bear River Range is a critical migration corridor for native wildlife such as elk and deer. Because much of this landscape is privately owned, fences are creating barriers to these important migration corridors. Our GIS Lab used data from deer and elk GPS collars to generate a model that identified key wildlife movement impedance points where problematic fencing could be retrofitted. These data enable Yellowstone to Uintas Connection to prioritize and replace problem fences with wildlife-friendly fencing that will improve wildlife movement and migration through the region.

ECOREGIONAL PLANNING:

IDENTIFYING WILDLIFE-VEHICLE COLLISIONS HOTSPOT HIGHWAYS

The state of Utah is working to make Utah roads safer for motorists by reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions and improving movement corridors for wildlife. Wildlife move across many habitats throughout the year, which requires them to cross busy streets and highways. We are supporting independent researcher, Patty Cramer, and the Utah Department of Transportation to compile and map a decade of wildlife collision and carcass data, combined with important movement corridors, to identify hot spots of wildlife-vehicle collisions. These data and mapping products will better inform a planning process by the State of Utah. Actions on the ground may include building under and overpasses for wildlife that will benefit both wildlife and motorists.

degraded streams may not be successful or feasible. Simulated beaver dams (BDAs) began as a means to assess the potential benefits of beaver (Pollock et al. 2011). BDAs are affordable and effective (Pollock et al. 2017).



Wild Utah Project staff ecologist, Janice Gardner, speaking at the Weber River Partnership Confluence conference

WILDLIFE POLICY

Wild Utah Project values policy that is driven by science. We advocate for the use of best-available science to decision makers and planners in order to achieve the most informed management practices for conserving Utah's native wildlife, especially species at risk for population declines, habitat loss and degradation, and extinction.

We advocate for wildlife science by engaging with state and federal resource managers in working groups, serving on technical advisory committees, and through other resource management cooperatives. By being at the table with fundamental conservation science principles, providing up-to-date scientific literature, and assisting with filling data gaps, we strive to conserve Utah's native wildlife.

2018 WORKING GROUPS

Central Wasatch Commission is the entity tasked with preserving the Central Wasatch Mountains through long-term, landscape level solutions, which include canyon transportation improvements, concentrated development, environmental and recreational stewardship, and economic planning.

Three Forests Coalition is a coalition of regional conservation organizations working to improve wildlife habitat conservation and management on Utah's three southern Utah National Forests.

Utah Riparian Forest Restoration Working Group is a collaborative of state and federal wildlife and land management agencies and nonprofit conservation groups that is writing a Utah specific riparian forest restoration guidance document for use by many stakeholders and practitioners.

Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative is a partnership-based program, that includes dozens of agencies and other stakeholders, designed to improve high priority watersheds throughout Utah.

State Wildlife Action Plan Partners are a group of state and federal wildlife and land management agencies and non-profit conservation groups that are working to implement the conservation strategies and activities in Utah's Wildlife Action Plan.

Sagebrush Restoration Working Group is an inter-agency group of federal researchers and community partners currently working on a science framework for conservation and restoration of sagebrush ecosystems and sagebrush-dependent species across the Intermountain West.

STAFF



Allison Jones, M.S.

Executive Director
allison@wildutahproject.org

Mary Pendergast, Ph.D.

Conservation Ecologist
mary@wildutahproject.org

Emanuel Vásquez, M.S.

GIS Director
emanuel@wildutahproject.org

Janice Gardner, M.S., CWB®

Conservation Ecologist
janice@wildutahproject.org

Kim Howes

Development Director
kim@wildutahproject.org

Vivian Chan

GIS Analyst

Interns

Brendan Gibson
Young Don Yeo
Daniel Johnson

Contributors

Josh Epperly
Monica Cooper

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to the exceptional volunteers that completed their board terms in 2018 for their dedication and service to Utah's wildlife and wildlands. Veronica Egan, Lindsay Christensen Nesbitt, and Scott Berry have played instrumental roles in guiding our mission with their insights and unique expertise.



2013-2018 Wild Utah Project Chairman of the Board, Scott Berry, with Executive Director, Allison Jones

Jim Ack, D.V.M.

Director of Partnerships, Pathway Vet Alliance

Kirsten Allen, M.P.H.

Publisher and Editorial Director, Torrey House Press

Scott Berry, Esq.

Community Leader, Chairman of the Board

Lindsey Christensen Nesbitt, Ph.D.

Research Associate, University of Utah

Veronica Egan

Community Leader

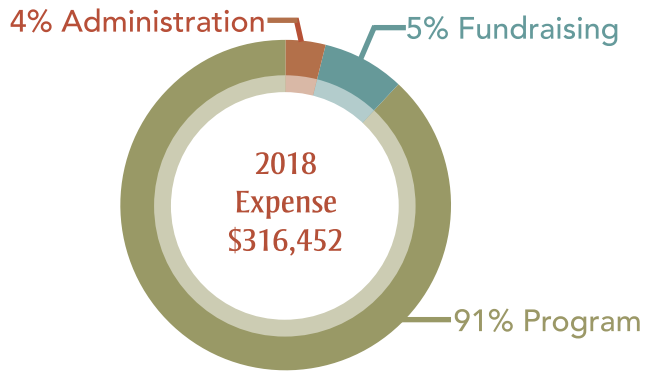
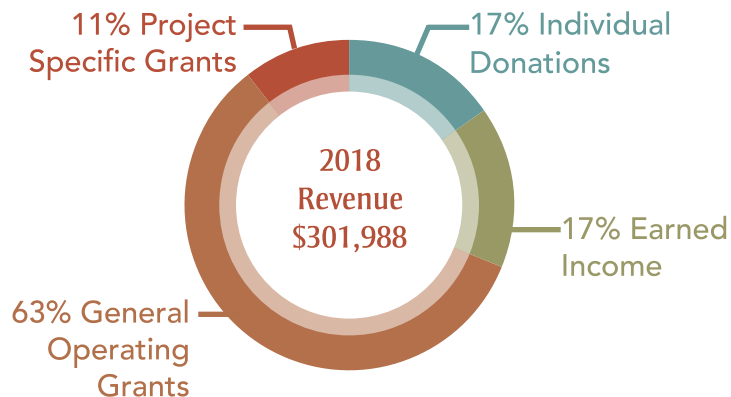
Carly Ferro, M.S.

Conservation Organizer, Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club

Kathleen Metcalf, M.S.

Creative Director, Torrey House Press

2018 FINANCIALS



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES 2018

Revenue	
General Operating Grants	\$210,280
Project Specific Grants	\$37,750
Individual Donations	\$57,276
Earned Income	\$55,451
Investment Activity.....	(\$58,769)
Total Revenue	\$301,988

Expense	
Program	\$287,158
Fundraising	\$15,833
Administration	\$13,461
Total Expense	\$316,452

THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 FUNDING PARTNERS

Steven B. Achelis Foundation
The Biophilia Foundation
Lawrence T. & Janet T. Dee Foundation
George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation
ESRI Conservation
The Fanwood Foundation
Great Salt Lake Audubon
Richard K. and Shirley S. Hemingway Foundation
JEPS Foundation
Jones Family Charitable Foundation
Jones Family Charitable Trust
Maki Foundation
Melling Family Foundation

The Nature Conservancy
New Belgium Brewing
Patagonia, Inc.
Charles Redd Center for Western Studies
Smith & Wilcox Blue Skies Foundation
Steiner Foundation
Tracy Aviary Conservation Fund
The Walbridge Fund
Kody Wallace and Gary Donaldson
Wilburforce Foundation
XMission
And all of our generous individual donors

Our work depends on donations from all kinds of folks, including people like you! We're grateful for every gift, from the smallest to the largest. To make a donation or learn more about our conservation projects, please visit our website at **wildutahproject.com**, **follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter**, or give us a call at **801-328-3550**.



WILD UTAH PROJECT

Science in service of wildlife and wildlands

Cover Photo:

***2018 Beaver Dam Analogue field day
courtesy of Lindsay Aman***

824 South 400 West • Suite B117 • Salt Lake City, UT 84101
801-328-3550 • info@wildutahproject.org • wildutahproject.org