



# FRONTLINE

R E P O R T



WOC files

**PAGE 3**  
Map of  
Proposed Red Desert  
Conservation Areas

**PAGE 6**  
Protecting America's  
Hidden Treasures:  
The National Landscape  
Conservation System

**PAGE 7**  
Arizona Public Television  
Series *The Desert Speaks*  
Visits the Red Desert

## A New Tune for the Red Desert Blues

Future Hopes Pinned to National Conservation Area Designation

By Molly Absolon

The rain started during the night. By morning we were camped in red gumbo that clung to our shoes. Each step was treacherous and slippery, not to mention tiring due to the weight of the mud. I looked at my group—a couple in their 60s, a family with two young children, two single parents with a child each—all of them out for an adventure. Unfortunately, we were getting a bit more of an adventure than we bargained for.

It wasn't hard to make a decision. With rain and snow in the forecast, we turned around and hightailed it back to the trucks five miles away, making our getaway to avoid being mired indefinitely in mud. Our trip was aborted, but not before we experienced some of the eerie magic of the Red Desert: the surreal colors of the Honeycombs at sunset; the silence of empty spaces interrupted

only by the wind; the bright unexpected splashes of pink bitterroot poking up out of the sand; a lone antelope standing guard on a low rise; and the sound of coyotes singing us to sleep.

The Red Desert is well known to Wyoming Outdoor Council members either through personal experience or through years of Frontline articles about the area. It is a land of dramatic contrasts that make it hard to characterize. You go from vast stretches of cracked mudflats to verdant springs; from isolated aspen groves to miles of stunted sagebrush; from emptiness to being surrounded by large herds of wild horses or racing pronghorn.

This part of Wyoming is home to 350 wildlife species, including elk, pronghorn, sage grouse, burrowing owls, myriad birds of prey, reptiles, and kangaroo rats. Swept clear of snow by relentless winds for much of the winter, the area provides crucial *continued on page 3*



Determining the Future of the Nation's Roadless Areas *Page 8*



Clearing Up the Haze: Air Quality and Oil and Gas Development *Page 10*



New Faces Join the Team *Page 14*

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

*Executive Director  
Mark Preiss*



**I.** Not everyone thinks the Red Desert is pretty. Many drive like mad to get through it as quickly as possible on their way to the sexier, easy-to-love landscapes to the west. But for others, the Red Desert is where they go to get away.

Wyoming people recognize that much of the Red Desert remains remarkably intact, and contains important parts of our history including pioneer trails and Indian sacred sites. The northern Red Desert is also the southern anchor to the Greater Yellowstone and holds wintering grounds for migrating big game and habitat for many different animals. It is a place people use to hunt, hike, ranch, or get lost in. And, from as far back as the 1800s, it has been a landscape people have sought to protect.

In historic preservation, buildings are thought of as one of the most tangible connections to our past, linking us to our history and those that came before. In the conservation field, we strive to protect nature's built landscapes so that our children can have the same meaningful experiences we have had. Our efforts to secure National Conservation Area designation for parts of the Red Desert are built on this common value.

**II.** In response to the latest push to extract Wyoming's remaining natural resources, we are working to bring common sense into the equation. Maybe it's time to call a time out in this rush, to get our bearings, to let rest the beleaguered BLM and FS staff, who are continually pressured by D.C. to open up more and more of Wyoming's lands to more and more of the same, while our water is left unprotected, our skies hazed over, our wildlife bewildered as they seek safe winter ranges, birthing grounds, and routes through the maze of uncontrolled development.

Many of our current efforts are tied to orchestrating such a break, to giving all sides the time necessary to make better informed and more creative decisions on how we can balance short-term gains with long-term investment in what matters to Wyoming people.

I know that with you, we can continue to be the voice of common sense. We know that the clear skies of the Upper Green are filling with the haze of unprecedented industrialization. We know that DEQ and EPA are concerned, but also seemingly deer-in-headlight unable to do something about it. We know that there are good people working in these agencies trying to do the right thing, and we're trying to help them do so.

**III.** In order to succeed, we need to know what issues hit home for Wyoming people and where they see a need for us to be involved. Tom Bell and others created the Wyoming Outdoor Council around his kitchen table. We want to sit down with citizens around the table again to find out what's important to people across the state.

Some say talk is cheap, but we understand the importance of building and maintaining relationships. In the months ahead, we will be setting the table to engage in discussions about what matters. What matters to you. We want to know what you think are the most compelling issues in your community. We want to hear how you think we are doing. And we want to know what you would like to see done different to protect Wyoming's way of life.

Please call Andy Blair, our community outreach coordinator, or me, if you would like to host one this summer. No sugar needed for the coffee.

Happy Trails,  
Mark



Established in 1967, the Wyoming Outdoor Council (WOC) is the state's oldest and largest independent statewide conservation organization. Our mission is to protect and enhance Wyoming's environment by educating and involving citizens and advocating environmentally sound public policies and decisions.

Frontline Report is the quarterly newsletter of WOC and is provided as a benefit of membership. Letters to the editor and articles by members are welcome.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

WOC, 262 Lincoln, Lander, WY 82520  
(307) 332-7031 (phone)  
(307) 332-6899 (fax)  
woc@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim States, Saratoga  
*President*  
Laurie Milford, Laramie  
*Vice President*  
Susan Lasher, Worland  
*Treasurer*  
Tom Bell, Lander  
*Emeritus*  
Joyce Evans, Saratoga  
Scott Kane, Lander  
Barbara Oakleaf, Lander  
Barbara Parsons, Rawlins  
Terry Rasmussen, Casper  
Sandy Shuptrine, Jackson  
Anthony Stevens, Wilson

### STAFF

Molly Absolon  
*Communications Director*  
Michele Barlow  
*Director of Government Affairs and  
Conservation Education*  
Andy Blair  
*Community Outreach Coordinator*  
Mary Corning  
*Administrative Assistant*  
Bonnie Hofbauer  
*Office Manager*  
Steve Jones  
*Director of Air and Water Quality*  
Lisa Dardy McGee  
*Director of National Parks and Forests*  
Bruce Pendery  
*Director of Public Lands*  
Meredith Taylor  
*Wildlife Program Coordinator*  
Tova Woyciechowicz  
*Community Organizer*

Mark Preiss, *Executive Director*

Anne Austin, *Frontline Designer*

RED DESERT *continued from page 1*

winter range for an array of migrating mammals, while in the spring it is a birthing and nesting site. The desert's distinctive landmarks—the Boar's Tusk, the Oregon Buttes, and Steamboat Mountain—guided emigrants on their way west and served as important sacred spots for the indigenous people who lived and hunted here for thousands of years.

But in spite of its beauty, cultural significance and abundant wildlife, the Red Desert is not an easy place. You can read journals from Overland Trail emigrants describing snowstorms in August, impassable mud after rains, and insufferable heat in October. Some things haven't changed.

Others have. As you are well aware, energy development—with its roads, well pads, compressor stations, power lines, truck traffic and more—is already affecting parts of the Red Desert. Damage has also occurred as a result of everything from motorized recreation to the web of fences stretching across the area that block wildlife movement and fragment habitat. Years of drought have taken a toll on the quality of forage available in the desert causing declines in wildlife already stressed by human-caused impacts.

The Wyoming Outdoor Council has been working with our members and allies to protect this unique landscape since our founding 38 years ago. One of WOC founder Tom Bell's first efforts was to push for the area to be designated as a North American Antelope Range. His concept was not new. Lander resident Dr. Frank Dunham proposed that the desert be set aside as a winter game preserve back in 1898, and in 1935 Wyoming Governor Leslie Miller sought to have the area

*continued on page 4*

“Look at a map of this State, and in the northern part of Sweetwater County, you will find a tract of land marked “the red desert.” We conclude that by setting off a portion of country [indicated on the map], enough of this territory would be taken in to furnish a winter range for the elk and other large game for all time... .

If [we] can pull this scheme through Congress, it will be one of the greatest triumphs for game protection yet achieved.

Dr. Frank Dunham, Lander, Wyoming  
1898, Recreation, Vol. IX, p. 271-2

## WYOMING'S RED DESERT



Greater Red Desert



Boundaries for Frank Dunham's proposed winter game preserve in the Red Desert with links to summer ranges in Greater Yellowstone.



Jack Morrow Hills Planning Area. Key parts of this corner of the Red Desert have been identified as the core of the proposed National Conservation Area.





RED DESERT *continued from page 3*

transformed into the Great Divide Basin National Park. People like Dunham, Miller and Bell have recognized that this is a place that deserves to be protected for more than 100 years. Today, we remain committed to carrying on the effort.

### National Conservation Area

Our current efforts have coalesced into a campaign to have the northern Red Desert—approximately 300,000 acres around the Jack Morrow Hills Planning Area—designated by Congress as a National Conservation Area. National Conservation Areas are part of the Bureau of Land Management's National Landscape Conservation System, which was established in June 2000 by then Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt. The mission of this system is to "conserve, protect and restore nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations." (See accompanying story on the NLCS on page 6.)

The National Landscape Conservation System consists of all of the Bureau of Land Management's National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Historic and Scenic Trails. In Wyoming, this includes 42 Wilderness Study Areas—including seven in the proposed National Conservation Area—as well as the Continental Divide Trail, the Oregon Trail, the Mormon Trail, the Pony Express Trail, the California Trail and the Nez Perce Trail.

Specifically, National Conservation Areas are designated by Congress to provide for the "conservation, use, enjoyment, and enhancement of select natural areas, recreational destinations, paleontological sites, and other special environments, including fish and wildlife habitat." The BLM currently manages 14 National Conservation Areas across the West, with the most well known being the

10-million plus acre California Desert Conservation Area and Red Rock Canyon Conservation Area outside of Las Vegas.

### BLM Unlikely To Provide Adequate Protections On Its Own

For years, the Wyoming Outdoor Council and our allies have sought to work with the BLM through the National Environmental Policy Act to come up with common sense solutions and alternatives for protecting the Red Desert, but increasingly it is becoming obvious that this effort is unlikely to be successful.

The BLM is under clear direction from the Bush administration to expedite energy development on public lands, regardless of its sensitivity or historical uses. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2005, the Wyoming BLM has announced changes in its policies that are effectively cutting people out of the planning process. These changes include shortening the time to review and protest lease sales; charging for access to public documents; failing to extend comment periods in spite of website failures and incomplete information; and refusing to consider public comments based on unclear requirements.

As a result, we have come to believe that National Conservation Area designation—which is an act of Congress rather than an administrative decision by the BLM—is the best way to ensure the Red Desert remains a living, vibrant landscape for generations to come.

### The Jack Morrow Hills Coordinated Activity Plan

In the meantime, the Jack Morrow Hills Coordinated Activity Plan, which was released in the summer of 2004, remains in limbo. The Wyoming Outdoor Council, and a number of others, filed protests of the plan alleging that it failed to comply with the National Environmental Policy

Act because it does not provide adequate protections for

## The Red Desert's Less Famous Residents

*Much has been written about the Red Desert's elk and pronghorn herds, but not so much about the other 348 or so species that live in the area. We thought it would be interesting to introduce readers to a few of the desert's lesser known, but equally fascinating inhabitants.*



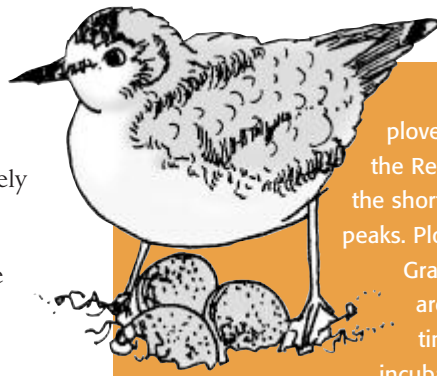
**Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)** A small ground-dwelling bird with no ear tufts, burrowing owls can be found in abandoned ground squirrel or prairie dog burrows in the Red Desert. Found only in the Americas, burrowing owls were first described by a Jesuit priest in Chile in 1782. The Latin word 'cunicularius' means mine or miner—an apt description for a bird that makes its home beneath the ground. Burrowing owls are one of the smallest owl species. They weigh only five or six ounces and stand 10 inches high on long, stilt-like legs.

big game, sage grouse and water, and because it largely ignored the approximately 100,000 public comments submitted on behalf of conservation.

“One of the biggest problems with the BLM’s plan is that it is largely a ‘trust us’ kind of a document,” says Bruce Pendery, the public lands director at the Wyoming Outdoor Council. “It is too vague and too discretionary. While the BLM has recommended that environmentally sensitive development occur in some places, there is no hard-core commitment or enforcement to those recommendations. Hence the reason we filed a protest. It’s hard to trust the agency based on its current track record.”

According to BLM regulations, these protests should have been acted on 90 days after they were filed. Months have passed since that deadline came and went, and the BLM has still not reached a final decision on the future management for the Jack Morrow Hills.

“You can read this failure to act as a recognition of the plan’s shortcomings,” Pendery says. “But even if they revise the plan based on our input, given the BLM’s recent decision-making pattern both in Wyoming and all over the West—I am not optimistic any alternative will live up to our desires.”



**Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*)** The mountain plover is a medium-sized sandpiper-like bird that breeds in the Red Desert. Despite their name, mountain plovers prefer the short-grass prairies of the western Great Plains to the high peaks. Plover hens lay up to three eggs on bare ground. Gradually, the birds build up a nest of rootlets and grass around the eggs. Pair bonds are fleeting—females sometimes leave the nest to the males so they can lay and incubate another clutch of eggs with a different mate.

“The BLM has not shown the leadership or courage required to put even the smallest piece of public land off limits to drilling. For this reason, we believe it is time to take the future of the Red Desert to the people.”

Throughout the planning process for the Jack Morrow Hills, people from all walks of life have agreed that the Red Desert was different and worth saving. Now they have to come together again.

Says Lander resident and owner of Thornberry Automotive, Mark Thornberry: “Enough is enough. Wyoming has always been known for its wide-open spaces and its opportunities for citizens to travel and recreate in landscapes largely untouched by industry. Despite the hardships of living here, that’s why many of us choose to live in this state. The Red Desert is a national treasure worth protecting. Some of it should just be left alone.”

## What You can do

Write a letter to the editor of the Casper Star-Tribune and your local paper as well as to Senator Craig Thomas asking for protection of the Jack Morrow Hills through National Conservation Area designation.

### Senator Craig Thomas

307 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: 202-224-6441  
Fax: 202-224-1724  
Email: [http://thomas.senate.gov/html/body\\_email.html](http://thomas.senate.gov/html/body_email.html)

### Casper Star-Tribune

Letters editor: Daniel Sandoval  
170 Star Lane  
P.O. Box 80  
Casper, WY 82602  
307-266-0549  
800-559-0583  
[letters@casperstartribune.net](mailto:letters@casperstartribune.net)

To find contact information for other Wyoming newspapers, visit the Friends of the Red Desert web site at: [www.reddesert.org](http://www.reddesert.org)



National Conservation Area designation includes multiple-use. Responsible grazing, off-road vehicle use, hunting and other forms of recreation in the Red Desert will be part of the management plan.

# Protecting America's Hidden Treasures

## *The National Landscape Conservation System*

By Molly Absolon

Have you examined the ruts left more than 100 years ago by wagons heading west across Wyoming? Have you hiked sections of the Continental Divide Trail across the Red Desert? Or maybe you've camped or hunted in one of 42 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wilderness Study Areas in Wyoming? Then you've been in part of the National Landscape Conservation System, whether you knew it or not.

The NLCS is comprised of 26-million acres of some of BLM's most valuable landscapes around the West: National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, National Recreation Areas, Scenic and Historic Trails, Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

This June marks the 5th anniversary of the system, but it's a birthday that could go largely unnoticed by many Americans, even those who know and love these places. The system, which was created by Bruce Babbitt during his last year as secretary of the interior under President Clinton, has struggled with obscurity. Now, as it turns five, the entire NLCS has been named one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

You can blame the Bush administration's anti-environmental record for the system's tepid support, but in some ways the lack of attention harkens back to the Bureau of Land Management's origins. This is an agency that doesn't have much conservation in its history.

The Bureau of Land Management, originally the Division of Grazing, was created in 1934 under the Taylor Grazing Act to manage a half-billion acres of "leftover" land. These vast expanses of territory

were largely ignored by the public because much of it was dry, inaccessible and in many ways defied the standard definition of beauty. As a result, few people cared how they were managed besides the ranchers using them for grazing their cattle. Therefore, the division operated with relative freedom and very little oversight for years. In 1939, it became known as the Grazing Service and five years later, the BLM.

This shift in nomenclature did little to affect policy until 1976, when the Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandated that the BLM, like the National Forest Service, manage its lands for "multiple use." But the BLM's history was hard to shake. For years, the agency was jokingly referred to by many as the "Bureau of Livestock and Mining"—a reflection of its reputation for favoring resource exploitation over other uses, particularly conservation.

Babbitt's decision to create a system within the BLM that was focused on the sound management of its most sensitive cultural, ecological and aesthetic sites, seemed to be an attempt to give the agency's conservation efforts clout and prestige. After all, the BLM does manage the most land of any federal agency, and many of these acres are well worth special consideration. But lack of funding and Congressional support has meant the existing units in the National Landscape Conservation System have struggled. These extraordinary lands face threats from road building, habitat fragmentation, energy exploration, urban encroachment, increased recreation, exploding off-road vehicle use, and most importantly, inadequate funding.

The recent inclusion of the National Landscape Conservation System among America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places was triggered, according to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, by the BLM's chronic understaffing and under funding, which jeopardize the system's long-term viability. Listing does not ensure protection or guarantee increased funding, but designation can be a powerful tool for raising awareness. For the NLCS, such knowledge and public support could prove to be what it takes to bring the system out of obscurity and into the realm of public discourse. ▶

## What You can do

Please take a few minutes to write a letter to BLM Director Kathleen Clarke to let her know that you support the National Landscape Conservation System and want the BLM to put energy and money into it to ensure its long-term success. The BLM rarely hears from individuals or groups on this issue, so we need to make sure they know we care. You can send copies of this letter to your BLM state director, as well as to your congressional delegation.

**Kathleen Clarke, Director**  
Bureau of Land Management  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

**Bob Bennett, State Dir., Wyoming BLM**  
5353 Yellowstone Road  
P.O. Box 1828  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003  
Phone: (307) 775-6001  
Fax: (307) 775-6003



### Great Basin Spadefoot (*Spea intermontana*)

The Great Basin Spadefoot is a small, rather rotund, grey or olive-green amphibian. Looking a lot like a large pebble, adult spadefoots are 4 to 6.5 centimeters long with short, stubby limbs. The most distinctive feature is the source of their name: the small, black "spade" on the first toe of each hind foot. This hardened tissue allows

them to dig into loose soil for shelter. Spadefoots can spend up to eight months a year underground and can lose up to 48 percent of their body moisture without ill effect. A frightened spadefoot is able to dig itself rapidly into the soil, disappearing from sight in a matter of minutes. Some spadefoot species can gather enough energy from just a few feedings for a year of dormancy.



# The Desert Speaks

## Travels With Arizona Public TV

Mac Blewer, Public Lands Legislative Representative, National Wildlife Federation

The spring rains of 2004 had been good to the Red Desert. Alkali Draw was covered by a lush blanket of green grass and forbs, and the purples, blues and pink hues of phlox, lupine and evening primrose waved in the breeze as northern harriers soared over the sage, greasewood and rabbit-brush.

From our camp perched at Chicken Springs, where the Continental Divide snakes around Bush Rim over the distant Oregon Buttes, the setting sun caught the Pinnacles at such an angle that their yellow peaks gave the impression of ancient, worn pyramids.

As if on cue, a full russet moon began to rise over the Honeycomb badlands, and the crew of Arizona Public TV (The Desert Speaks program) whom we had guided for the last four days sprang into action. There was Tom, the director, always at a hundred places at once; Dan, the fast on the draw videographer; Fran, the sage, silent producer; Dave, the loquacious and quirky narrator; and Yar, the knowledgeable and eccentric naturalist. They were a perfect team.

As Dan clicked the "off" button on the camera, the team let out a series of good-natured exclamations. Indeed, it had been a good few days with tragedies avoided, glitches few (except a couple of flat tires), and some incredible adventures. Everyone was exhausted, yet ebullient. From the mad capers of camping with Charlie Wilson and his band of packgoats to panning for gold and stalking moose with Tom Bell near the Sweetwater River, to capturing the antics of antelope in the Great Divide Basin, it had been one heck of an adventure.

John Mionczynski, who was helping me guide the film crew, puffed on his pipe as he finished laying out his bivvy sack in the middle of the meadow.

"This area wasn't nearly as popular as it is these days," he intoned. "A bunch of us used to come down from Atlantic City and have a huge party every now and then, but not much else."

We looked out over the Big Empty admiring the rising moon. "But it's like no other place. I wouldn't trade it for anything else," he added.

"It's kind of ironic. To try to protect a place, you have to let people know that it's here in the first place," I murmured quietly.

John smiled. "Yeah, you might be right. I don't want to see more roads and gas rigs in this part of the desert either. But I hope that we don't love it do death in the process."

We sat for a while in silence.

The next morning after grabbing some coffee, we ran to set up a shot of John and Dave in John's 50-year-old BMW motorcycle dangerously banking around a corner near the old South Pass-Superior Stage-Coach route.

**"I've been to a lot of places in the world, a lot of deserts, but this one is really something. Really something." From a team that had explored deserts from Arizona to Bolivia and beyond, his words were not flippantly spoken.**

John, decked out in a well-used aviator's jacket and biker's cap, bore the visage of a man in his element. Dave, tucked snugly in the motorcycle's sidecar wearing ski goggles and a WWI fighter pilot's cap that John had loaned him, looked nothing short of a member of Monty Python's Flying Circus. The sight of Dave trying to maintain professional composure as he asked John questions was almost too much to bear. Perfect. John Cleese meets the Red Desert.

That day we took a two track along Bush Rim through tall grasses scraping the trucks' underbellies; a ferruginous hawk soared above and a desert elk appeared briefly before sprinting into some stands of big sage. By dusk, we had visited the Tri-Territory Marker, Steamboat Mountain, the Boar's Tusk, the White Mountain Petroglyphs and finally the Killpecker Sand Dunes.

In the evening, we all circled around the fire in the sea of the Sands and laughed. Yar and Dave gave us a brief version of the swinging east European jig. John played some Celtic and ragtime tunes on his squeeze-box, and Marian Doane, a representative of the Friends of the Red Desert Coalition who had acted as a third scout, briefly displayed a spadefoot toad she had extracted from her tent flap, drawn there by the late night dews.

At one point, Yar turned to us and said, "I've been to a lot of places in the world, a lot of deserts, but this one is really something. Really something."

From a team that had explored deserts from Arizona to Bolivia and beyond, his words were not flippantly spoken.

We all drank a final toast to the Red Desert and then retired into the dunes to a silent sleep in a landscape one could still, at least for now, call paradise. ▶

**The Desert Speaks** is an Emmy-award-winning television series produced by Arizona Public Television that explores desert regions around the world. The series included two episodes on the Red Desert: **Goat Packing in the Red Desert** and **Wyoming's Red Desert**. The goat packing show aired on Wyoming Public television this past spring, however the other episode, which briefly addressed development threats from oil and gas, was deemed too controversial and was not shown in Wyoming. To find out more or to order copies, go to: <http://thedesertspeaks.org/season.cfm?displayseason=1500>

# Which Roadless Rule Rules?

## *The Twisting Path To Determine the Future of the Nation's Roadless Areas*

By Steve Jones

Your favorite roadless area could be in danger. Not only from the blade of a road grader, but also the logger's chainsaw and the driller's derrick.

For Rachael Price, this threat hits home. The Wyoming Range is one of her favorite places to go.

"It's an idyllic little world up there. And it has unique advantages for every season of the year," she says. Rachael works for the National Outdoor

Leadership School, and last summer she took a group of 14- and 15-year-old teenagers up to the Wyoming Range for two weeks.

"We got a feeling of being in a remote and pristine area within a day. We saw amazing high country meadows — full of brilliant wildflowers in early July — enough to make 14-year-old boys stop in their tracks.

"There were at least three herds of elk with over 50 animals. One basin we came upon was simply covered with elk," she says. She notes that hunters are undoubtedly aware of the bounty of the Wyoming Range, since many hunting camps were spotted along their two-week sojourn. And in the winter, the area offers miles and miles of great cross-country skiing.

But the remote pristine nature of the Wyoming Range, and many other roadless areas in Wyoming, are now in danger. Recently, the U.S. Forest Service adopted a new rule governing roadless areas

across the country. This new rule will remove the moratorium on road building in roadless areas for operations such as timber cutting and oil and gas extraction.

### How did we get here?

The U.S. Forest Service passed the new rule in May 2005. It is intended to replace the old roadless rule, which was enacted during the last days of the Clinton Administration in January 2001. The new rule sets up a rather complicated process for determining on a forest-by-forest basis, whether to retain the existing roadless

areas, or put them to other uses that, of necessity, would involve building roads to access natural resources, such as timber, minerals, and oil and gas.

The new rule attempts to involve the governors of each state in this process, by giving them 18 months to petition the U. S. Forest Service and make recommendations regarding whether some or all roadless areas in their states should remain roadless or whether they should be transformed into roaded areas resembling so much of the rest of our non-wilderness forest lands.

Litigation over the validity of the new rule will undoubtedly be initiated. A court could rule that the new rule was not promulgated properly, or that it violates federal law (such as the National Environmental Policy Act, or the National Forest Management Act). Such an eventuality may save existing roadless areas, but the outcome of litigation is unlikely to be known before the 18-month period allotted for the governors to make their roadless recommendations.

### Freudenthal's role pivotal to future of Wyoming's roadless areas

So the question inevitably becomes: What will Governor Dave Freudenthal do about recommending retention of roadless areas in Wyoming to the U. S. Forest Service?

At this point, his intentions are not known. He has indicated in the past that he is not a fan of this roadless area recommendation process. He sees it as an unfunded mandate from the federal government, imposed unfairly upon the states. And he does have a point, since each state that submits recommendations will be expected to become a cooperating agency in the forest management process for each forest. He may, therefore, simply decline the opportunity to have the state of Wyoming become involved in this roadless review process. But he may also choose to become involved and make recommendations to the U. S. Forest Service.

His staff has contacted the conservation community and let it be known that he will listen to our concerns. But he also intends to listen to the concerns of the tim-



### ROADLESS RULE HISTORY:

**January 2001:** USFS adopts rule imposing a moratorium on building roads in national forest roadless areas.

**December 2002:** The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals finds the "Clinton Rule" was properly promulgated by the USFS.

**July 2003:** Judge Clarence Brimmer finds that the "Clinton Rule" was not promulgated in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Wilderness Act. Conservation groups, including WOC, appeal Brimmer's decision to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

**May 2005:** USFS adopts a new rule (the "Bush Rule") allowing each national forest to determine the fate of roadless areas.

Also in May 2005: oral arguments heard in the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals regarding Judge Brimmer's 2003 decision enjoining the Roadless Rule





Lloyd Dorsey, GYC

Range are currently managed as roadless areas.

ber industry, the motorized recreation industry, and the oil and gas and mining industries.

Roadless areas, like those of the Wyoming Range, Salt River Range and Greys River Range, as Rachael Price has found, often offer unique primitive recreational opportunities that are treasured by hunters, anglers, cross-country skiers, backpackers, and day-hikers alike. They can form a much-needed buffer and protective barrier for wilderness from civilization's negative impacts. Yet their accessibility can enhance their recreational value on a year-round basis. At a time when Wilderness Areas receive enormous use and pressure from hikers, backpackers and horsepackers, roadless areas can sometimes offer fantastic opportunities for solitude, solace and remoteness. ➤

### QUESTIONS REMAINING

- Will the Bush Rule be successfully challenged and overturned in court?
- Will the Brimmer decision on the Clinton Rule be overturned by the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals?
- Will Governor Freudenthal make any recommendations to the USFS about preserving Wyoming's roadless areas?
- How seriously will the USFS take the roadless recommendations of any state's governor?



Lloyd Dorsey, GYC

The Wyoming Range is popular for outdoor recreation year round. Here a hiker traverses a field of mountain bluebells.

### What You can do

Now is the time for all conservationists to come to the aid of their favorite roadless area. Let Governor Dave Freudenthal know that you have a stake in his decisions to recommend – or not recommend – protection of roadless areas in Wyoming. Make it a personal letter, if you can. Tell him why roadless areas—and particularly your favorite roadless area—are important to you and why you do not want to see it roaded and bladed and scarred.

# Keeping Our Air Clean

By Bruce Pendery

Oil and gas activities release hundreds of tons of industrial pollutants into the pristine air above Wyoming every year, and that amount is expected to rise—especially in the Upper Green River Valley.

“This place is incredibly special...the air quality in the Upper Green River Valley is the cleanest in the lower 48 states. It is almost as clean as central Tibet...which scientists say has the cleanest air in the world,” says Upper Green River Valley Coalition community organizer Linda Baker.

“We want to keep it that way,” she adds.

But mounting evidence indicates that oil and gas development is causing major air quality problems in western Wyoming. As a result, the Wyoming Outdoor Council is increasing its attention to the issue. Our goal is simple: to ensure that air quality is not only maintained but improved in areas where it has been degraded.

for Questar’s proposal to drill wells year round in the Pinedale Anticline field. This assessment showed that nearly three times as much nitrous oxides (NOx) were being produced than were originally predicted in the 2000 Pinedale Anticline environmental impact statement: a total of 1,895 tons per year, rather than the 693 tons per year anticipated.

The environmental assessment also disclosed that monitoring air pollution, which the BLM had committed to do in the original environmental impact statement, was not being done.

This spring, more evidence appeared in the Jonah Infill environmental impact statement. This document showed that the 3,100 new wells called for in the Jonah field would lead to increased visibility impairment in the Bridger Wilderness on up to 10 days per year. In addition, the project will release 16,362 tons of hazardous air pollutants and 56,226 tons of volatile organic compounds per year; double existing background concentrations of sulfur dioxide; triple particulate matter concentrations (PM10 and PM 2.5); double existing ozone levels; and exceed nitrogen deposition thresholds in the Bridger Wilderness, Popo Agie Wilderness, and Wind River Roadless Area.

What all these numbers mean on the ground is increased haze, decreased visibility, more acidification in lakes, and the likelihood in the future of increased human health problems such as asthma.

Even the BLM seems to recognize there is a problem. The agency is pursuing supplemental analysis of air quality issues resulting from the Jonah Infill project before giving it final approval. And in December, the BLM and Forest Service discontinued approving new drilling permits in the Riley Ridge field near Big Piney, partly because of the need to update air quality analyses.

We believe the BLM needs to do the same thing for the Pinedale Anticline. The agency’s decision approving well drilling in this field stated that if NOx emissions exceeded the expected level—which they are by a factor of nearly three—then BLM would “undertake additional cumulative air quality environmental review.” This has yet to happen.

Finally, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has begun to weigh in. In a letter to the BLM in December regarding the Questar winter drilling proposal, EPA officials said they were “very concerned about the emissions from the increased rate of drilling and the potential effects of the increase in emissions on Class I airsheds.” Class I airsheds are areas of extremely high air-quality that receive special protection under the Clean Air Act such as national parks and wilderness.

## In the News

The media has also called attention to the growing problem. The Pinedale Roundup opined on December 16, 2004, that, “It is about time that the BLM and the [Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality] stood up and took some responsibility for what happens on the land and in the air *continued on page 12*”

Interagency Monitoring of Protected Environments (IMPROVE)



**Pinedale residents say it is increasingly common for the Wind River Mountains to be obscured by haze, a change many attribute in part to oil and gas development.**

We believe we can protect Wyoming’s incredible vistas and ensure air pollution does not harm the health of Wyoming’s people, especially more vulnerable populations like the old, the very young, and those with asthma. But we face a challenge as the booming natural gas industry continues to grow.

“We’re currently in significant expansion here...with several thousand wells over several thousand miles,” said Dan Olson, the head of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality’s Air Quality Division, at a recent air quality symposium sponsored by the Wyoming Outdoor Council and the Upper Green River Valley Coalition.

“Quite frankly, nobody...including me...can calculate and answer the question of whether there is [an air quality] problem,” Olson said.

## The Evidence Grows

But signs of such a problem have begun to surface. The first significant evidence of increased air pollution in the Upper Green River Valley was documented last fall when the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released an environmental assessment





# AROUND WYOMING

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAM WORK

### **GREATER YELLOWSTONE**

***Management Plans for the Upper Green River Valley Delayed.*** The releases of the draft Pinedale Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the South Piney coalbed methane project environmental impact statement (EIS) are now not expected until late summer or fall. When the plans are released, the Wyoming Outdoor Council and our partners in the Upper Green will ensure you are informed and know how to be involved. *Contact: Bruce Pendery and Meredith Taylor*

***National Forest Plan Revisions: Coming Soon to a Forest Near You.*** Preliminary work has begun on revising both the Bridger-Teton National Forest and the Shoshone National Forest management plans. The new plans will determine priorities and set policies for the forests for the next 10 years or more, so we believe it is critical for both the Wyoming Outdoor Council and the general public to weigh in. We have begun meeting with both Bridger-Teton and Shoshone national forest officials. We'll keep you posted on how you can be involved. *Contact: Meredith Taylor*

***Using Good Science To Guide Good Policy.*** The National Forest Service is required to use Management Indicator Species—or key sensitive plants and animals—to guide forest planning, but for years the Bridger-Teton has failed to fulfill this obligation. Finally this spring, after pressure from the Wyoming Outdoor Council and others, the Forest Service agreed that they have been operating illegally without Management Indicator Species designations and monitoring. Now the forest's staff biologist has developed a list of "Ecological Indicator Species" and habitat types. *Contact: Meredith Taylor*

***Closing the Gate: Protecting Special Places in the Wyoming Range from Development.*** The U.S. Forest Service has announced its intention to pursue leasing 44,600 acres of the Bridger-Teton National Forest for oil and gas development. These leases are primarily located in the northern portion of the Wyoming Range. Although

this lease sale is considerably smaller than the one proposed and delayed due to public pressure last fall, it still contains important wildlife habitat, provides excellent hunting terrain, and is a popular recreational destination for skiers, snowmobilers, anglers and hikers. Furthermore, it is adjacent to a number of suspended leases in roadless areas that have not been developed because of access problems. We are concerned that this sale will open up these other acres, in effect nearly tripling the number of acres available for development. Furthermore, given the problem with air quality from the development already taking place in the Upper Green River Valley, we are reluctant to see more drilling occur until adequate regulations and monitoring for air quality are in place. *Contact: Bruce Pendery and Meredith Taylor*



***A Highway Runs Through It.*** The Togwotee Pass Highway Reconstruction Project is slowly unfolding as summer construction season ramps up into overtime mode. The Wyoming Outdoor Council worked with Earthjustice and American Wildlands to comment on the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT)'s application to the Army Corps of Engineers for a permit to build in wetlands. The Corps' agreed with our concern

that a provisional authorization of the overall highway alignment under the current preferred alternative is likely to violate the Clean Water Act unless significant design changes are made. We—and the road builders—are now waiting for the Corps' final decision. Meredith Taylor continues to serve as the conservation representative on the Advisory Committee for the reconstruction project. *Contact: Meredith Taylor*

***Shoshone National Forest Timber Projects in the Works.*** In 2003, the Wyoming Outdoor Council won an appeal on the Wiggins Fork Timber Sale in the Shoshone National Forest near Dubois. Now an Environmental Assessment on a revised sale is due to be released this fall. The Wiggins Fork Vegetation Treatment will include 475 acres of mechanical treatment, 497 acres of lodgepole treatment, 1,318 acres of aspen restoration, and 2,218 acres of prescribed burning. The Wyoming Outdoor Council is discussing the changes with the Wind River District silviculturist to address our concerns about the impacts of the sale on recreation, wildlife and the forest ecology. In addition, there is a watershed improvement project proposed along Charlie Creek, as well as fuel reduction projects near Mad Butte, Trout Creek, Wood River, Popo Agie, Carter Mountain and the Upper Wind River. These projects are designed to reduce fuel loads along forest/private land boundaries through timber cuts and prescribed burns. A feasibility study exploring opportunities for bio-mass technology to provide electric power for Dubois using fuels from the fuel-reduction projects is currently being researched. The Wyoming Outdoor Council is monitoring these projects to ensure they balance the forest's various uses and protect recreation and wildlife. *Contact: Meredith Taylor*

***National Migration Corridor Proposal Unveiled.*** The Wildlife Conservation Society has released its plan for a National Migration Corridor proposal to protect the existing migration links between key habitat areas in western Wyoming. The Wyoming Outdoor Council is working with the Society to develop a *continued on page 12*



**AROUND WYOMING** *continued from page 11*  
strategy for public support of a Congressional designation that would protect the corridor for pronghorn and other mammals traveling from the mountain highlands of Grand Teton National Park to the Upper Green River Valley and Red Desert. *Contact: Meredith Taylor*

### POWDER RIVER BASIN

#### ***Powder River Basin Coalbed Methane Boom Moderated by Pennaco Victory.***

The Wyoming Outdoor Council continues our efforts to ensure that the victory we had in the court case of Pennaco Energy, Inc. v. U.S. Department of the Interior is translated into a victory on the ground for ranchers and rivers in the Powder River Basin. The unique and unprecedented effects of rampant coalbed methane development in the Basin have continually been shown to violate laws written to protect things such as water quality, and the Wyoming Outdoor Council has found that legal advocacy is an effective tool for ensuring that development takes place in a way that minimizes its negative effects. In response to the Pennaco decision, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing new environmental analyses that should lead to better regulation of coalbed

methane development in the area. In addition, in January we joined the Powder River Basin Resource Council in filing a follow-up lawsuit intended to impress upon the BLM the full implications of the Pennaco case. Finally, our separate legal challenge to the environmental impact statement (EIS) approving coalbed methane development in the Powder River Basin remains pending in the Wyoming District Court, but we are cautiously optimistic because in March the Northern Plains Resource Council received a favorable decision from the Montana District court in its challenge to the Montana coalbed methane environmental impact statement. *Contact: Bruce Pendery*

### STATEWIDE

#### ***Ancient Corridors Move Across the State.***

Meredith Taylor continues to take her Ancient Corridors program around the state as part of the Speaker's Bureau for the Wyoming Council for the Humanities. This outreach program presents the prehistoric view of free-ranging wildlife herds through the Trapper's Point bottleneck near Pinedale. She most recently presented the program at a Wildlife Society event held at the University of Wyoming in Laramie and was a featured speaker at the Murie Center's Annual Earth Day Festival in Jackson. She will also present the program at the 8th Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem in Yellowstone National Park in October. *Contact: Meredith Taylor*

***Legislative Update.*** In anticipation of the 2005 Budget Session of the Wyoming Legislature, 13 interim and select committees are examining a hodgepodge of public policy topics including natural gas valuation and taxation, minerals development using advanced technologies, establishment of utility corridors along highways, coyote management on agricultural lands, recreational use of state trust lands, temporary water rights for towns and cities, and management of municipal solid waste. For more information on study topics and meeting dates, visit the legislature's web site at <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/> or contact the Legislative Service Office at 307-777-7881. *Contact: Michele Barlow*

### CLEAN AIR *continued from page 10*

under their watch." Not to be outdone, the Casper Star-Tribune wrote in an editorial on April 25, 2005, that, "Air quality could be the hammer that nails a lid on Wyoming's energy boom."

Reflecting all these concerns, Governor Dave Freudenthal wrote in the State's comments regarding air quality impacts from the Jonah Infill project: "I would hope that BLM would use the present circumstances as an example of what not to do in the future. The BLM must be vigilant in its management of development such that it always knows the condition of the various resources within its management authority and the incumbent impacts of development on those resources. Anything less jeopardizes current and future developments."

### What We Are Doing

On April 27, together with a number of other conservation groups, the Wyoming Outdoor Council met with EPA officials in Jackson to discuss our concerns. It was a productive meeting that we believe will help ensure the EPA continues to be a strong advocate for protecting air quality.

And on June 2, the Wyoming Outdoor Council and the Upper Green River Valley Coalition hosted a public forum on air quality issues in the Upper Green River Valley. The panel included Terry Svalberg (air quality specialist with the Forest Service), Susan Caplan (air quality specialist with the BLM), Dan Olson (director of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Air Quality Division), Larry Svoboda (EPA), and Bob Yuhnke (a private attorney who represents environmental groups, including the Wyoming Outdoor Council). About 50 people attended the meeting.

Mr. Yuhnke is providing expert comments on several environmental impact statements for us. He brings more than 30 years experience in all areas of the Clean Air Act.

Finally, the Wyoming Outdoor Council has increasingly focused attention on the EPA and State Department of Environmental Quality rulemakings that affect air quality.

Our goal—to protect our clear, clean air and human health—is simple, but the tools this task demands of us require precision and accuracy to wield effectively. We look forward to this new challenge. 🐾

### ***Kitchen Table Conversations Across the State.***

As most of you know, the Wyoming Outdoor Council was started around a kitchen table by Tom Bell and others who were concerned about the threats they saw to Wyoming's environment, wildlife and quality of life. Now we're going back to that proverbial table. This summer and fall, the Wyoming Outdoor Council is planning to hold a series of meetings around the state based on the kitchen-table model. Our goal is to meet members and local leaders, talk about what we are working on, and find out what people see as the most pressing environmental issues facing their communities. If you are interested in hosting a kitchen-table conversation, let us know and we'll set it up.

*Contact: Andy Blair 🐾*

# A Summer/ Fall 2005 Events Calendar

*Your guide to fun educational adventures in the company of Wyoming's people and landscapes*

## **JULY-AUGUST** The Wyoming Outdoor Council offers custom adventures into the Red Desert.

Give us a call and we will plan a trip for you. Due to our limited resources, we ask that your group size be no smaller than six people. Contact: Andy Blair, andy@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org or 307-332-7031 ext. 14.

## **JULY 16**

**Palisades Wilderness Study Area hike in Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF), W of Jackson.** Sponsors: Wyoming Chapter of Sierra Club and Wyoming Wilderness Association. Contact: Kate Drexler, kate.drexler@sierraclub.org, 733-4557 or Page McNeill, wildjh@wavecom.net, 690-3505.

**Brown-capped rosy finch survey in Medicine Bow National Forest (W of Laramie)** Sponsors: Audubon Wyoming, US Forest Service. Contact: Alison Lyon, alyon@audubon.org, 721-4887

## **JULY 23**

**Sweetwater River to Martin's Cove trip (E of Jeffrey City).** Sponsor: Wyoming Chapter of Sierra Club. Contact: Kirk Koepsel, kirk.koepsel@sierraclub.org, 672-0425

**Bird-watching in the Beartooth Mountains (NW of Cody).** Sponsor: Meadowlark Audubon Society. Contact: Neil and Jennifer Miller, 568-9346

**JULY 23-24** Day hikes and car camping, Steamboat Mountain and Killpecker Sand Dunes in Red Desert (NE of Rock Springs). Sponsor: Friends of the Red Desert. Contact: Marian Doane, 332-3608, marian@reddesert.org

**JULY 29** Palisades Wilderness Study Area hike in BTNF (W of Jackson). Sponsor: Wyoming Wilderness Association. Contact: Page McNeill, wildjh@wavecom.net, 690-3505

**JULY 30** Expedition into grizzly bear habitat near Cody with Chuck Neal, biologist and author of "Grizzlies in the Mist." Sponsor: Wyoming Wilderness Association. Contact: Page McNeill, wildjh@wavecom.net, 690-3505

**AUGUST 6-7** Day hikes and car camping, Steamboat Mountain and Killpecker Sand Dunes in Red Desert (NE of Rock Springs). Sponsors: Friends of the Red Desert and Wyoming Chapter of Sierra Club. Contact: Marian Doane, 332-3608, marian@reddesert.org or Kate Drexler, kate.drexler@sierraclub.org, 733-4557

## **AUGUST 13**

**Rock Creek Trail hike in Medicine Bow National Forest (S of Arlington).** Sponsor: Wyoming

Chapter of Sierra Club. Contact: Kate Drexler, kate.drexler@sierraclub.org, 733-4557

## **Wyoming Range hike in BTNF (W of Pinedale).**

Sponsor: Biodiversity Conservation Alliance. Contact: Erik Molvar, erik@voiceforthewild.org, 742-7978

## **AUGUST 16-18** Brucellosis workshop in Laramie.

Sponsors: U.S. Animal Health Association, U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior, University of Wyoming. Contact: Jill Lovato, 766-5146, jillberg@uwyo.edu

## **AUGUST 19** Pickle Pass/Grayback Roadless Area monitoring trip in BTNF (S of Jackson).

Sponsor: Wyoming Wilderness Association. Contact: Page McNeill, wildjh@wavecom.net, 690-3505

## **AUGUST 20-21** Bennett Mountains Wilderness Study Area hike in Seminoe Mountains (NE of Rawlins).

Sponsor: Wyoming Chapter of Sierra Club. Contact: Kate Drexler, kate.drexler@sierraclub.org, 733-4557

## **AUGUST 20-21** Day hikes and car camping, Honeycomb Buttes in Red Desert (SE of South Pass City).

Sponsor: Friends of the Red Desert. Contact: Marian Doane, marian@reddesert.org, 332-3608

## **AUGUST 22-29** Washakie Wilderness Area archaeology trip (NE of Dubois).

Sponsor: Taylor Outfitters. Contact: See sidebar for details.

## **AUGUST 27** Snowy Range hike in Medicine Bow National Forest (near Elk Mountain).

Sponsor: Biodiversity Conservation Alliance. Contact: Jeremy Nichols, jeremy@voiceforthewild.org, 303-454-3370

## **AUGUST 27-28** Wyoming Range tour in BTNF (S of Jackson).

Sponsor: Wyoming Wilderness Association. Contact: Page McNeill, wildjh@wavecom.net, 690-3505

## **SEPT. 10-11** Honeycomb Buttes in Red Desert (SE of South Pass City).

Sponsor: Friends of the Red Desert. Contact: Marian Doane, marian@reddesert.org, 332-3608

## **SEPTEMBER 10** Battle Mountain hike in Medicine Bow National Forest (near Baggs).

Sponsor: Biodiversity Conservation Alliance. Contact: Jeremy Nichols, jeremy@voiceforthewild.org, 303-454-3370

## **SEPTEMBER 11-12** Renewable energy conference in Douglas.

Sponsor: Converse Area New

Development Organization, U.S. Department of Energy. Contact: Ed Werner, ewerner@can-dowwyoming.com, 358-2000

## **SEPTEMBER 17**

## **Rock Creek hike in Bighorn National Forest (W of Buffalo).**

Sponsor: Wyoming Chapter of Sierra Club. Contact: Kirk Koepsel, kirk.koepsel@sierraclub.org, 672-0425

## **Ride the Red.** Join us on the Wyoming Outdoor Council's annual mountain bike ride through the Red Desert.

Contact: Andy Blair, andy@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org, 332-7031 ext. 13.

## **SEPTEMBER 23-24:**

## **"Future of Energy" lecture and panel discussion in Jackson.**

Sponsor: University of Wyoming Lecture and Seminar Series. Contact: Sara Flitner, sflitner@wyoming.com

## **EXPLORE THE PAST** ARCHAEOLOGY PACK TRIP BENEFITS WYOMING OUTDOOR COUNCIL AUGUST 22-29

Join Taylor Outfitters and archaeologist Rich Adams in a search for artifacts of the reclusive Sheepeaters, an ancestral branch of the Shoshone tribe. The Sheepeaters or Mountain Shoshone are thought to be the earliest human inhabitants of the Yellowstone region.

The Absaroka Range, where the trip takes place, is a spectacular area of high plateaus and open meadows. By horseback or on foot, we'll see moose, elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep. In addition, you can enjoy swimming, fishing, painting, photographing, or visiting with other archaeology buffs.

This eight-day horsepack trip costs \$2,000 per person, including a \$500 tax-deductible donation to the Wyoming Outdoor Council. We'll provide horses, meals, tents, and camping equipment. You bring a sleeping bag/pad and personal items. Meredith and Tory are longtime Wyoming residents, proficient outfitters, and savvy authorities on the natural and cultural history of the Wind River Valley.

**Contact: Meredith Taylor at 307-455-2161 or metaylor@wyoming.com**



## Anthony Stevens Joins Board of Directors

### *Wilson Resident's Love of the Outdoors Drives His Concern For Wyoming's Wild Places*

From a young age, Anthony Stevens turned to the wilderness in his backyard for adventure, exercise and escape.

"I spent as much time as I could outside fishing and backpacking," Anthony recalls. "That was where I was happiest, so I have a hard time watching these places be destroyed."

This concern has motivated Anthony to get involved in conservation, and in March he joined the Wyoming Outdoor Council's board of directors. He is excited about having an opportunity to give something back



to the wild places that have nourished him and helped him find his way in the world. He follows in his mother's footsteps. Emily Stevens, who passed away in 2002, was a board

member and benefactor of the Wyoming Outdoor Council for a number of years.

"My mother definitely started off my interest in the outdoors," Anthony says. "I owe a lot of that to her, but I have developed my own personal relationship with Wyoming as well. It is this relationship that drives my desire to help ensure we protect our open spaces for the future."

As a boy, Anthony spent summers on a ranch near Dubois and wintered in Jackson. He went away to boarding school in his teens. He was, he says, a somewhat troubled young man.

"As a kid I spent a lot of time getting in and out of trouble," Anthony says. "I mastered blaming other people for everything that went wrong. As I grew older I realized that there was no one else to blame but myself. If I wanted to change, it was up to me. If I wanted to make a difference in the world, it was up to me."

Anthony enjoys just about anything that gets him outside, and he spends as much time as he can hiking, backpacking, kayaking or backcountry skiing with his

fiancé Erika Wagner. Erika and Anthony plan to be married in July.

The Wyoming Outdoor Council welcomes Anthony to our board of directors. As our youngest board member, we look forward to adding his perspective to our vision and work.

## Christine Lichtenfels Steps Down From Board

### *Former Staffer and Board Member Leaves a Legacy of Quiet Competence*

The first time I met Christine Lichtenfels was in the early 1980s, when we were vying for the same spot on our college crew. Christine was known to be tenacious, hard working, committed and tough. I was not optimistic about my chances to beat her out for a seat in the junior varsity boat. Lucky for me, Christine decided to quit crew so that she could go to the canyons of southeastern Utah over spring break. Even then, she had her priorities straight.

It's hard to believe more than 20 years have passed since those days. Both Christine and I have changed in some ways, but not so much in others. Christine is still tenacious, hard working, committed and tough. I didn't want to be up against her then, and I wouldn't want to be today. She is a formidable adversary, and she fought tirelessly on behalf of Wyoming's environment during her years at the Wyoming Outdoor Council.

Christine has stepped down as a member of the Wyoming Outdoor Council's board of directors to take some time off



before eventually pursuing a new career in physical therapy. We'll miss her. In her classic behind-the-scenes kind of way, she quietly took care of the mundane

day-to-day business details that allowed the Wyoming Outdoor Council to become an increasingly efficient and professional organization. Under her leadership, our

organization gained financial stability and established an endowment. She was also a steadfast, dependable worker who sought no glory for her personal achievements, which whether in advocacy, academics or athletics have been impressive and far-reaching. It will take us a while to fill Christine's shoes. — Molly Absolon

## Andy Blair Joins Staff

### *New Outreach Director Comes With Passion and Enthusiasm for Wyoming and Conservation*



Andy Blair majored in philosophy at McGill University in Montreal because he was interested in the nature of "what is and why." But when he asked his professor those very

questions, he hit a wall of resistance.

"Philosophy lost a lot of its credibility for me at that point," Andy says. "I thought I would be studying knowledge and that there was room for asking questions to gain understanding, but it seemed as if all we considered were a lot of dead white dudes."

Andy's interest in thinking about the bigger questions in life have led him in a number of different directions, most recently to the Wyoming Outdoor Council as our new outreach director. He comes to us from the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) where he worked as a field instructor and later a program supervisor.

"I feel as if I've been an environmental advocate throughout my NOLS career," Andy says. "I've just taken a different approach. My job was to educate people and to help them develop a relationship with the land. It seems like a natural progression for me to move into work where I am more actively trying to protect these places."

Andy first got interested in the outdoors when he was 11 and went off to summer camp. The campers were required to take part in a number of camping excursions, some of which were life changing, if not life threatening according to Andy's recollection.



"I had no idea how to pack a backpack, so mine was totally lopsided," Andy remembers. "We hiked five miles, and I was miserable. Then it rained for five days. There were four of us crammed into one of those plastic K-mart tents with no rain fly. We had two inches of standing water in there. Hiking out, I tripped on a root and fell on my face. I never wanted to go camping again."

But something must of stuck with Andy. He continued to participate in the camp's trips and gradually they became less of an unwelcome burden. By the time he got to high school, he was active in the outdoor club and learning to climb. In 1985, he came to Wyoming to take a NOLS mountaineering course.

"My love for Wyoming started back in '85 when I first came out here on a NOLS course. I love the open spaces and the wildness of the land, the deserts and the mountains." Andy says.

A mountaineer, rock climber, skier and all-around outdoor enthusiast, Andy hopes to continue the Outdoor Council's efforts to reach out to new constituencies and build partnerships in unexpected places including in some of his own communities.

"Climbers, bikers and others could be more active protecting the places where they recreate, but we need to reach out to them and let them know they can make a difference," Andy says.

Andy, his wife Jacki Klancher, and their brand new baby live in Lander. We welcome Andy and his family to the Wyoming Outdoor Council. Already his laugh can be heard echoing through the office, and his energy and enthusiasm are a great addition to the staff.

## Geneva Bound

### *Farewell to Marisa Martin - Greater Yellowstone Program Attorney*

Traveling late at night with me on the highway between Muddy Gap and Lander, Marisa Martin got her first Wyoming-style welcome when we hit a bobcat. It wasn't just the fact that only one car passed us following the accident or the sadly unique experience of seeing the grandeur of the dead animal that gave her a sense that she'd hit the real frontier. Rather it was the fact that our seasoned wildlife coordinator,

Meredith Taylor, picked up the bobcat to skin it for a museum. (She secured the necessary permits, of course). Marisa bravely continued to work in Wyoming in spite of this introduction.

Marisa was the Wyoming Outdoor Council's lead attorney on many energy development issues in the Upper Green River Valley until her departure this past winter. In this role, she was passionate, intelligent and tireless, and we've missed



her contributions since she left to pursue other endeavors. Marisa is currently working for a California attorney on Superfund issues before heading off to Switzerland this summer. Her intel-

ligence and ingenuity recently earned her a highly competitive Fulbright Fellowship at the University of Geneva Institute for International Studies. There she will be focusing on climate change.

Marisa eventually will bring her knowledge back to the United States and undoubtedly will find a way to make our planet more livable when she does. We are happy to know that she will be working on climate change because finding sustainable solutions to our environmental problems helps all of our efforts, even those back here on the range. — *Tova Woyciechowicz*

## Welcome New National Parks and Forests Director

### *Lisa Dardy McGee Returns to Wyoming Outdoor Council*

Lisa Dardy McGee's first taste of the West came during a summer spent scooping ice cream in Grand Canyon National Park. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, she was unprepared for the grandeur, scale and color of the western landscape. She spent five summers during and after college working in national parks, first as a ranger intern in Yellowstone, and then as a ranger naturalist in Grand Teton National Park.

"I have so many great memories of those summers," Lisa recounts. "I remem-

ber when my parents first visited me in Wyoming. It was my first season in Grand Teton. They said that I'd be crazy to ever leave. They sensed how much I loved it."

Lisa has moved around a bit in the years since she first came to Wyoming, most recently clerking for a judge in Anchorage, Alaska, but the circle closed this summer when she returned to assume the job of National Parks and Forest Director at the Wyoming Outdoor Council.

"I interned at WOC two summers ago," Lisa says. "I have enjoyed this past year in Alaska, but it never felt like home the way Wyoming does. When I saw the job opening at WOC, I was thrilled."

As a student at the University of Wyoming, College of Law, Lisa focused on environmental and natural resource law. "My experiences living and working in northwest Wyoming inspired my decision to go to law school. I wanted to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for the protection of the wild places that mean so much to me."

Lisa brings to her position a unique blend of legal knowledge, an awareness of the many issues facing National Parks and Forests, and a strong commitment to Wyoming. She is familiar with Wyoming's backcountry, having trekked through many miles of it on foot and ski, and she has an intimate knowledge of its plants and animals after a couple of seasons as a field botanist, a job managing Wind River Herbs' lab and organic farm in Alpine, and time in the field with her wildlife biologist husband Matthew.

"I am grateful to live in a place like Wyoming where there are ecosystems that remain relatively intact. I look forward to working to help ensure that those systems remain protected for people in the future to be awed by them as I was and still am," she explains. ▶



# Ready, Set, Ride the Red! Saturday, September 17

Jeff Vanuga

It's that time of year again. Mark your calendars now for our annual mountain bike ride in the Red Desert on September 17.

Come on out and join us. Like last year, we'll travel up to 35 miles through the scenic desert, but there will be a number of route options for varying skill levels. Snacks and refreshments will be provided at aid stations and a beautiful T-shirt will be given to all participants.

We are still working out the particulars of the route but will send out a detailed itinerary to all of those who sign up.

**Pre-registration is required.** To help cover our expenses, the registration fee will be \$25.

#### Contact:

Andy Blair, 307-332-7031 ext 13  
andy@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org

Tova Woyciechowicz  
307-332-7031 ext 15  
tova@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org



Tom Dairin


## Out & About at the County Fair

Everybody loves a county fair: fry bread, rodeo and fast-flying rides. The Wyoming Outdoor Council will be joining the fun at the Fremont County Fair this summer and we need your help! We'll be at the fair 10 hours a day from July 21 through August 2, and we need volunteers to work at our booth. Any time you can donate would help us fill our days. No experience needed. Please contact Tova or Andy at 307-332-7031 to sign up.



**WYOMING  
OUTDOOR  
COUNCIL**

262 Lincoln • Lander, WY 82520  
Ph: (307) 332-7031 • Fax: (307) 332-6899  
email: woc@wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org  
web: www.wyomingoutdoorcouncil.org  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

 Printed on 100% recycled paper,  
using vegetable-based ink

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 149  
LANDER, WY 82520