

### From the Director



GARY WILMOT

Te worked all over the state of Wyoming in 2013, and—thanks to our members—the Wyoming Outdoor Council is operating at full speed. Our statewide influence and our capacity to do good work continue to grow, and that's a testament to the energy and the robust support of our growing network. Here are just a few examples of how we covered the map last year.

Day P. Will

### Major Improvements to the Shoshone Forest Plan

Our advocacy helped lead to the withdrawal of more than 670,000 acres of the Shoshone National Forest from oil and gas surface occupancy in its forthcoming long-term land-use plan. These withdrawals only make sense given the incredible values of the Shoshone.

### 2 Baseline Groundwater Testing

In November of 2013, Wyoming Governor Matt Mead and the rest of the members of the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission voted unanimously to approve new statewide rules requiring oil and gas drillers to scientifically establish and monitor the quality of groundwater around oil and gas sites prior to and after development. We worked for years to achieve this baseline testing rule and it is a remarkable achievement for the state of Wyoming.

### **3** Fracking Chemical Disclosure Lawsuit

In November 2013 the Wyoming Supreme Court heard our successful oral arguments in this case. Stay tuned.

### Safequarding Drinking **Water Aquifers**

We worked hard in 2013 to protect portions of the Madison and Fort Union aguifers that have been slated for exemptions from the Safe Drinking Water Act. Exemptions would allow companies to pollute these resources. We want to be sure this important groundwater is protected for current and future generations. Stay tuned.

### Protecting Adobe Town

We and our partners helped convince the Bureau of Land Management to defer leasing 1,560 acres in the Adobe Town area from the May 2013 lease sale. We also successfully protested the BLM's oil shale plan, as it would have increased lands available for leasing in Adobe Town.

### The Northern Red Desert

Due largely to our tenacious opposition to drilling in the Jack Morrow Hills, the amount of land leased for development decreased from about 226,000 acres in 2006 to a little over 44,000 acres as of September 2013.

### Protecting the Fifteenmile Basin

We and our partners helped convince the BLM not to offer parcels for oil and gas leasing in the Fifteenmile Basin. The majority of the Fifteenmile Basin, a uniquely Wyoming ecosystem comprising sagebrush, salt desert, and badlands, is in largely pristine condition and remains unleased. The basin is a favorite among mule deer, pronghorn, and chukar hunters who seek solitude and a true adventure in a high-desert environment.

### **3** Reducing Air Pollution in Pinedale

We successfully advocated that the DEQ adopt key provisions in new guidelines

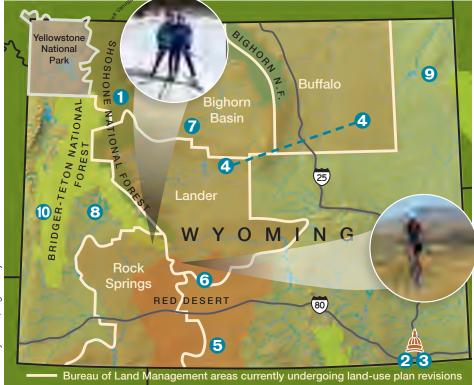
to control oil and gas pollution in the Upper Green River Basin, The DEQ publicly noted the value of our input.

### Rare Earth Elements

We're engaging in a proposed rare earths mining project near Hulett. Stay tuned.

### Final Step for the Wyoming Range

We and our partners are close to getting across the finish line in our nearly decade-long race to protect the Wyoming Range. The last step will be a successful resolution to the contested leases south of the Hoback, along the eastern slope of the range. Stay tuned!



## How a Small Group of Citizens Helped Shape the Shoshone Plan



BY TIM HUDSON

It's no secret that Wyoming's political climate poses real challenges to environmental

advocates, but I can confirm it's also a state where a few individuals can still make a difference. In the last two years. a group of Fremont County citizens did iust that, and as a member of the group and with a big thank-vou to the Wyoming Outdoor Council for its help and support with our efforts—I'd like to share our story.

During the summer of 2012 the Shoshone National Forest released a draft of its long-awaited updated forest management plan. Watchdog organizations such as the Wyoming Outdoor Council, The Wilderness Society, and others found significant shortcomings in the plan's alternatives. One of the most glaring problems was that the plan allowed for potential oil and gas development on the eastern slopes of the Wind River Mountains, in an area known locally as the Lander Front.

The Front is the landscape that defines Lander. It's our view from Main Street. It's where locals and visitors go to walk the dog, ride horses, hunt, or camp for the weekend. It's home to a cross-country ski area where the local high school team practices, a world-famous limestone crag for rock climbers, miles of trails for hikers, runners, bikers, and riders, biggame habitat, trout streams, and more.

The Lander Front is a mix of private, public, and state lands. Many of the larger ranches here have entered into conservation easements, and even the Bureau of Land Management has recognized the Front's unique character: the agency plans to designate BLM parcels "no surface occupancy" for oil and gas development.

The Forest Service's draft plan, however, did not protect its Lander Front lands. These parcels, some adjacent to those with BLM or private protections. were left wide open for oil and gas development.

In response, 20 or so citizens and businesses—calling ourselves the Wind River Front—came together to help fix this inconsistency. With technical and logistical help from the Outdoor Council and others, we produced maps and information boards, and hosted an open house and comment-writing workshops to engage the public. We also advocated our position with state and federal decisionmakers and stakeholders and submitted formal comments on the plan.

All of our efforts ultimately paid off with great news: In its final version, the Forest Service listened to citizens and fixed its management prescription for the Lander Front. While our group was far from alone in its efforts, we were happy to lend a helping hand. In the end, important Forest Service lands deeply valued by our community were protected, and I can't help but think that the efforts of our local group played a role.



# **Groundwater Testing Rule:** A Remarkable Achievement

We set out a number of years ago to achieve a statewide requirement for baseline groundwater testing prior to new oil and gas development. We and many others have long argued that collecting water quality data prior to and after drilling are necessary steps.

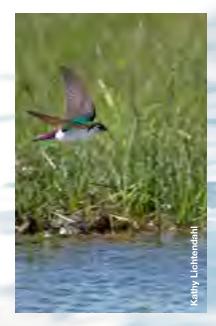
The troubling situation in rural Pavillion—where citizens, an energy company, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the state are caught up in trying to determine the cause of groundwater contamination near a gas field—could have been avoided if the water had been tested before the first well was drilled.

In 2013, the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission gave unanimous approval to new statewide rules that will require oil and gas drillers to scientifically establish and monitor the quality of groundwater around sites prior to and after oil and gas development. While this rule isn't perfect, and will likely need to be improved over the years, we believe it is an important achievement and a great step forward that will help protect the people of Wyoming. We participated in every phase of this rule's development, and we worked hard in 2013 to make sure the approved rule was strong and scientifically sound.

Here's what some of our members and friends had to say about the new rule.

"We are always concerned about groundwater quality (and quantity) as it may affect users of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. As they are frequently passing through arid environments, the protection of springs and other water sources is a major concern. While our general view is that fracking that has the potential to impact these water sources should be prohibited, we certainly would favor baseline testing as a desirable measure to encourage potential developers to adopt technologies that will reduce the potential for adverse effects to a minimum."

> -James R. Wolf, director, **Continental Divide Trail Society**





### Thank You

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### 2013 Financial Statement

Pre-audited figures

## Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2013

Assets	2013
Cash and Savings	\$212,498
Donations Receivable	103,498
Property and Equipment	78,095
Endowment / Investments	3,454,544
Prepaid Expenses	1,699
Total Assets	\$3,850,334

\$30,181
2,235,630
805,478
779,045
\$3,820,153
\$3,850,334

### **Statement of Activities**

Year Ended December 31, 2013

Support and Revenues

Individual Contributions	\$254,266
Foundation Contributions	495,224
Memberships	16,122
Other Support	846

**Total Revenue and Support** \$766,458\*

Expenses by Activity

Program Services	\$672,119
Management and Administration	101,278
Fundraising	70,588
Total Expenses	\$843,985

<sup>\*</sup> The apparent revenue shortfall in 2013 resulted from a long-term pledge that was received early, and booked in the previous year. While the pledge was recognized as income in 2012, it was restricted for distribution to operations over the next four years, including 2013.



#### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Wyoming Outdoor Council is to protect Wyoming's environment and quality of life for future generations.

#### WHO WE ARE

The Wyoming Outdoor Council is a nonprofit, member-supported, 501(c)3 conservation organization. Established in 1967, the Wyoming Outdoor Council is the state's oldest independent statewide conservation organization.

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