





Wildlife
and
Wild Places

“I am honored to have worked with such distinguished environmental organizations as NWF to let the President know that a majority of Congress opposed his efforts to gut one of our cornerstone environmental laws, the Clean Water Act.”

Representative John Dingell (D-MI)

“Society has become so sophisticated that government often overlooks the basics. Fortunately groups such as the NWF have stepped forward to insist that nothing is more basic than clean water. A government that ignores this fact disserves the public interest.”

Representative Jim Leach (R-IA)

This has been a difficult year for wildlife and wild places. At no other time have there been so many assaults from so many directions on our environment and the laws that protect it. But these threats have only deepened NWF’s commitment to mobilizing citizens, partnering with our affiliates and working with policymakers to safeguard our natural heritage and turn back new attacks on the Earth’s treasures.

Holding Fast to Our Nation’s Clean Water Act

This past year, NWF geared up for one of its most significant battles in many years: halting the Administration’s attempts to unravel three decades of Clean Water Act protections for the nation’s waters. With the help of thousands of NWF supporters and advocates, our nationwide campaign to keep Clean Water Act safeguards strong for America’s wetlands, streams and other waters is starting to pay off.

Now 31 years old, the Clean Water Act is one of our nation’s most effective environmental laws. As the primary vehicle for restoring and maintaining the nation’s waters, the Clean Water Act has made rivers, wetlands, lakes and streams safer for people and wildlife like the Florida panther, chinook salmon and the northern pintail duck.

Administration Efforts to Weaken the Clean Water Law ~ Early in the year, the Administration initiated a formal process to change rules governing the types of waters that are protected under the Clean Water Act. This rulemaking could have eliminated Clean Water Act protections for as much as 60 percent of the nation’s waters. The Administration also issued new policy guidelines, effective immediately, which require federal regulators to withhold Clean Water Act protections from an estimated 20 percent of the nation’s wetlands and many other waters. The result: tens of millions of acres of water resources—ponds, streams, wetlands and lakes—could have once again become exposed to dumping, pollution, filling and channelization.

Massive Public Outreach ~ NWF launched a nationwide public outreach effort to build broad-based support for maintaining Clean Water Act safeguards that have protected this country’s waters for more than 30 years.

On Capitol Hill, we organized a congressional visit day. Seventy activists from 37 states and Mexico converged on Capitol Hill, where 300 meetings took place in the House and

A scenic landscape of a mountain valley. In the foreground, a dirt road winds through a grassy slope. A river flows through the valley floor. The middle ground shows rolling hills and a road that curves through the landscape. In the background, dark, rugged mountains rise against a sky filled with heavy, grey clouds. The overall tone is somewhat somber due to the overcast sky.

The Ongoing Fight to Protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Poll after poll show that the American people want the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, vital habitat for many wildlife species, to remain off-limits to oil and gas development. NWF remains vigilant in its efforts to protect the refuge. This past year, we successfully blocked drilling provisions in both the budget and energy bills. NWF will continue to fight any attempt in Congress to open this pristine area to development while supporting legislation that would permanently protect the refuge as a wilderness area.



Getting the Mercury Out

We think of rain as being clean and pure, but instead it is contaminated with mercury and other toxic substances which fall into lakes and streams harming wildlife, fish and people.

NWF is recognized as a leader in working for mercury reduction nationwide. This year NWF published two mercury reports: *Cycle of Harm: Mercury's Pathway from Rain to Fish in the Environment* analyzes rainfall data in 12 states; our *Mercury Products Guide* provides consumers tips on how to safely dispose of mercury products and purchase alternatives.

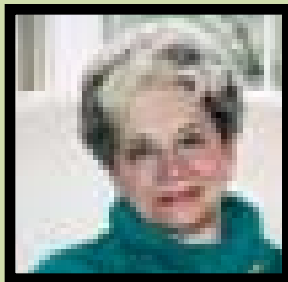
NWF is grateful for the support of the Garfield Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Beldon Fund, the John Merck Fund, Clear the Air and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

National Wildlife Federation
2003 Annual Report

Senate. We helped encourage members of Congress to cosponsor legislation that would turn back the assault on the Clean Water Act, retaining protections for all critical waters of the United States.

In the field, we generated over 10,000 comments and letters to Congress. We held activist summits for hunters and anglers in Chicago and Atlanta that kicked off letter-writing campaigns to Congress and the President. We produced a Clean Water Tool Kit so our affiliates around the country could educate and motivate activists in their communities. And, in partnership with Trout Unlimited and the Izaak Walton League of America, we set up a special website (www.waterforwildlife.org) for sportsmen and women to get involved to stop Clean Water Act rollbacks. With so much grassroots pressure and strong lobbying by NWF, more than 200 members of Congress signed a letter to the President which declared their opposition to the proposed rules. This letter received more bipartisan support than letters produced for any other environmental law.

In December 2003, in response to this broad-based and sustained outpouring of concern, the Administration announced that it would drop efforts to change rules to withhold federal protections from certain kinds of wetlands, streams and other waters. NWF, along with our partners and the help of our dedicated supporters, succeeded in forcing the Administration to take a small but important step in backing off its intentions to dismantle Clean Water Act protections. But it is only a first step: millions of acres of wetlands are still vulnerable due to the policy guidelines that are still in place. NWF will continue to build on its success in protecting our nation's waters.



Leslie Devereaux

Leslie Devereaux has her grandfather to thank for her life-long love of the environment. As a child she spent many wonderful times at his cabin on the Au Sable River in northern Michigan, where he was founder of a local conservation club. Today, as president of the Richard C. Devereaux

Foundation, named for her father, she is active in many environmental causes.

As a member of NWF's Heralds of Nature society and President's Council, Leslie is one of NWF's most passionate supporters. This past year she was awarded the Virginia Ball Founders Award for her commitment to conservation. A self-described animal lover, Leslie has watched with anger as corporate interests have carved up and paved over land and water resources all over the country without regard to the impact on wildlife habitat. "We need to defend against this constant encroachment," says Leslie. Leslie's other interests include rainforest conservation, protection of big cats and wolves, safeguarding the Great Lakes region and education. "Children need hands-on experience to understand how the environment works. They need to go to wild and pretty places."

"I support NWF because the Federation strives to educate the public and has the ability to use legal minds to argue the essential issues that NWF stands for: land, water and wildlife," says Leslie. She has committed to a multi-year pledge to fund NWF's Great Lakes environmental education programs and water quality work. Leslie's generous commitment is an inspiration.



Halting Destructive Water Projects

“Thanks to the hard work of NWF and the Corps Reform Network, we are finally putting the brakes on pork barrel water projects that are bad for the economy and the environment.”

Senator John McCain
(R-AZ)

For decades, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has dredged rivers, built dams and drained wetlands with little regard for the environmental consequences. While some of these projects are needed to support our national economy, many others are driven solely by pork barrel politics. NWF is at the forefront of a rapidly growing nationwide coalition committed to fundamentally redirecting the Corps away from projects that waste tax dollars and harm valuable marine and freshwater ecosystems—and toward efforts that make sense for the economy and for the environment. The Corps Reform Network is working with more than 100 local, state and national organizations to protect water resources and advocate for the reform of Corps policies. NWF has received generous support from the McKnight Foundation for this project, as well as a new grant from the Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation for the Corps Reform Network.

Uncovering the Facts about Global Warming

“At stake is whether the American people can have confidence the EPA will be left unfettered to report the facts on matters that involve the health and welfare of the nation. The agency cannot simply rubber-stamp decisions that suit the Administration’s political agenda.”

Jeremy Symons,
NWF’s Climate Change
and Wildlife Program

NWF sounded the alarm across the nation when we discovered that White House staff instructed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to alter a major report to downplay the risks of global warming. *The Report on the Environment* was intended to be the EPA’s first comprehensive status report on U.S. environmental quality.

Jeremy Symons, NWF’s manager of our Climate Change and Wildlife Program, who served as climate policy advisor for the EPA in the early months of the Bush Administration, published an op-ed in *The Washington Post* which was widely acclaimed for its insider’s view of global warming policymaking. The piece charted the deterioration of the Administration’s actions on global warming—from early decisions to sidestep solutions to more recent attempts to hold back information and keep the issue from the public’s view.



Dan Chu

NWF’s Senior Vice President for Affiliate and Field Programs

Dan Chu first discovered the value of common-sense conservation—an approach that incorporates the interests of everyone—in the Peace Corps. Stationed in Panama and Costa Rica, he realized that natives need to put food on the table, even if it means endangered species. And to change their ways, we must offer alternatives. That’s why he’s proud to work for NWF which is founded on this premise.

Dan has been with NWF since 1998, and he now heads up NWF’s nine Natural Resource Centers and is chief liaison with our 47 independent state affiliates. He is most energized when NWF and our affiliate leaders join together to fight on behalf of major wildlife management issues—on the local and national levels.

Dan got his start in 1989 as a door-to-door canvasser for NWF’s National Wildlife Action. He also headed up the Wyoming Wildlife Federation from 1994-98. He has a masters of science in Molecular Biology from the University of Colorado.



Wide Open Spaces for Wildlife

Celebrated for its wide open spaces, the American West is home to some of our most awe-inspiring wildlife—from buffalo and grizzly bears to bighorn sheep and mountain lions. But these lands are also grazing areas for livestock. And sometimes, cattle grazing areas bump up against wildlife foraging areas. Resolving conflicts between wildlife and livestock has long been an issue in the West.

“The National Wildlife Federation’s innovative programs have advanced the cause of grizzly bear conservation both on the ground and with the people of the northern Rockies.”

Chris Servheen,
Grizzly Bear Recovery
Coordinator, U.S. Fish and
Wildlife Service

A Win-Win Deal for Wildlife and Cattle Ranchers ~ This year, NWF implemented an innovative strategy to resolve this conflict: brokering agreements that result in moving livestock to new grazing areas while opening up much larger ranges for wildlife. In Montana, NWF negotiated the most significant wildlife protection deal in the Yellowstone area in many years, further reducing potential conflict between cattle and buffalo. Over the last 15 years, thousands of migrating bison have been killed by the Montana State government because of an unfounded fear that the buffalo would transmit the disease brucellosis to cattle grazing next to Yellowstone National Park. On the Gallatin National Forest, just west of Yellowstone National Park, NWF worked with ranchers and the U.S. Forest Service to move livestock off the Horse Butte cattle allotment to other national forest grazing lands. The move made available 2,400 acres of critical winter habitat for the Yellowstone bison herd. The trade was largely financed by the Murr Family Foundation.

Later in the year, thanks in part to the tremendous effort by NWF volunteer Lisa Robertson of Jackson, Wyoming, NWF worked with ranchers and the U.S. Forest Service to close the Blackrock-Spread Creek allotment near Grand Teton National Park. This deal provided 87,500 acres of wildlife habitat—25 miles long and 7 miles wide—and removed cattle from the path of grizzly bears foraging for food. Our financial partners included the Wiancko Family Donor Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming, the Charles Engelhard Foundation, the Arthur B. Schultz Foundation, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and the Vital Ground Foundation.



Tom France

*NWF’s Northern Rockies Natural Resource Center
Director and Counsel*

Tom has been a conservationist for as long as he can remember. Growing up in Duluth, Minnesota, he spent a great deal of time camping, hunting, fishing and canoeing in the boundary waters. At the age of 13, Tom tried to talk Ducks Unlimited into hiring him to count ducks. In 1981, after getting his law degree from the University of Montana, Tom established NWF’s Northern Rockies office and has been running it ever since. The focus of the office is endangered species recovery, which includes grizzly bears, wolves, sage grouse and prairie dogs.

Tom’s approach is to find common ground with unlikely partners. “We look at the world through a wildlife lens, it’s not just about advocacy. It’s about pulling together a larger community to achieve a particular goal,” says Tom. Tom’s proudest moments are restoring wolves to the Rockies and helping to recover grizzlies in Yellowstone.

Does Coal Bed Methane Development Fit with Montana's Way of Life?

Coal bed methane development is a type of oil and gas extraction.

In Montana, between 10,000 and 26,000 new oil wells are being developed which will pump out billions of gallons of wastewater and prompt construction of thousands of miles of roads and pipeline corridors.

What does this mean for Montana—its residents and wildlife? Last year, thanks to a grant from the Energy Foundation, NWF and its affiliates, the Montana Wildlife Federation and Wyoming Wildlife Federation, held a conference to examine the impacts of this process on Montana's big game, sage grouse, upland game birds, water quality, fisheries and wildlife habitat and to discuss ways to minimize environmental damage.

The conference was attended by twenty groups from the nonprofit environmental, government and scientific sectors.



Protecting the Red Desert

Where can you find...

The country's largest herd of free-roaming pronghorn antelope,

The world's largest desert elk herd and

The continent's biggest active sand dune system?

Wyoming's Red Desert, the nation's largest undeveloped high elevation desert.

A spectacular landscape, the Red Desert is a majestic expanse of public land, larger than Connecticut, where more than 350 species of wildlife make their home.

"My father was employed in the oil fields just south of the Red Desert.

So I've got a lot of hydrocarbon flowing through my veins.

But the Red Desert is more than just an energy reserve. Pronghorn migration routes all point to the Red Desert.

It doesn't make sense to me to block the pronghorn as we race to develop every last acre of the public's land."

Craig Thompson,
college professor, son of a petroleum worker and National Wildlife Federation board member

The Oil and Gas Threat ~ Unfortunately, oil and gas interests are targeting much of the Red Desert for natural gas production. More than 200 oil and gas wells are being planned for the Red Desert's Jack Morrow Hills area. Drilling in this area would add a mere nine weeks of gas and 39 minutes of oil to the nation's supplies and would be placed right in the path of a migration route used by pronghorn antelope.

A Top Priority ~ With so much at stake, NWF pushed the Red Desert to the top of our priority list in 2003. At public hearings this past spring, NWF and our affiliate, the Wyoming Wildlife Federation, voiced opposition to oil and gas development in the Jack Morrow Hills. And, joining with other conservation, tribal and citizen's groups, businesses and outfitters, we developed an alternative plan that would encourage the purchase or exchange of oil and gas leases in the Jack Morrow Hills and protect crucial wildlife habitat for big game, raptors and sage grouse threatened by drill pads, roads and pipelines. With lead support from Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation and the Wyss Foundation, NWF is able to continue to monitor and respond to the ongoing and escalating threats to this vital landscape.



*Earth Friends
Wildlife
Foundation*

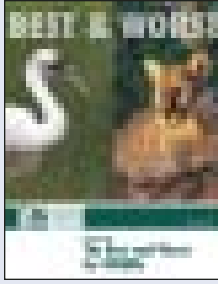
The Peregrine Falcon: A Potential Endangered Species Act Success Story

One of the top priorities of NWF's northeast program is our work to help recover or maintain populations of endangered species such as wolves, lynx, loons and raptors. Since 1999, in partnership with state biologists and volunteers, NWF has coordinated Vermont's effort to recover the world's fastest bird, the peregrine falcon. This year, we are pleased to report that the number of breeding falcon pairs in Vermont, now at 29, is high enough for the state to remove the peregrine from its list of endangered and threatened species—even though their recovery remains uneven in other states. The bird is expected to be delisted at the end of 2004.

Local Action to Save Wildlife

Helping people take action on the local level to protect wildlife and wild places—that is what NWF is all about. And this year, thanks to the support of Charles Deknatel, our Species Recovery Fund provided the means for local organizations to implement innovative solutions in their communities. NWF awarded grants totaling more than \$72,000 to organizations around the country. The grants ranged from \$3,000 to \$7,000 for projects such as protecting loggerhead sea turtle nesting grounds in Florida; providing bear-resistant garbage cans in Wyoming and Montana; and restoring habitat for the Karner blue butterfly in New York.





This year, NWF produced *The Best and Worst for Wildlife*, which ranked the species most helped or harmed by human actions. This year's winner was the whooping crane, with the birth of the first wild whooper chick to fledge east of the Mississippi in over a century. The Florida panther was the loser as its Everglades habitat rapidly disappears.



NWF's *Beneath the Hot Air* reveals that the Administration's global warming plan could increase the nation's carbon dioxide emissions over the next decade. U.S. carbon dioxide levels grew by 4.6 percent in the last five years. Under the plan, emissions are expected to increase 13 percent over the next decade.

To the Courts to Save the Florida Panther

NWF took legal action this year to save the Florida panther from extinction. Today, fewer than 100 adult panthers are left in the southern tip of Florida.

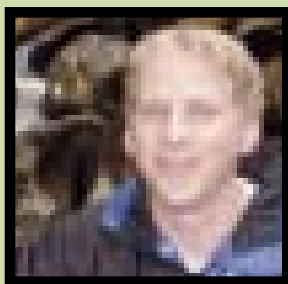
With our affiliate, the Florida Wildlife Federation, and the Florida Panther Society, NWF filed a lawsuit challenging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's recent approval of a massive limestone mine in the heart of panther habitat. This mine will destroy over 5,200 acres of panther habitat and will include a 60-foot deep open pit. NWF and its partners are asking a Federal District Court to order an assessment of the impacts that this proposed 60-year mining operation will have on the panther, as required by federal environmental laws. The mining company proposes to set aside a mere 13 percent of the project site for panthers—not nearly enough to sustain the big cat.

NWF also filed a second lawsuit challenging the U.S. Army Corps' use of the Clean Water Act's nationwide permitting process. These permits allow certain types of development without site-specific environmental review. NWF is seeking to force the Corps to assess the impacts of these blanket authorizations in regards to the panther habitat.

A Victory for Salmon

Northwest salmon and steelhead are in trouble. Four dams on the Snake River are killing off these species that once supported a thriving fishing and recreation economy. But this year, NWF and its partners won a major victory for Snake River salmon.

A federal judge ruled in favor of a lawsuit filed two years ago by NWF, two of our affiliates—the Idaho Wildlife Federation and Washington Wildlife Federation—and a coalition of local groups. According to the ruling, the Administration's plan to recover salmon is illegal because it does not adequately protect fish populations.



Casey Loe

Casey Loe has the environment in his genes. His mother, Geri LeVine-Loe, is a long-time member of NWF and has for years been active in environmental causes on the grass-roots level. So Casey grew up reading *Ranger Rick*, talking about environmental issues at the dinner table and hiking and enjoying the outdoors with his family. He was the only kid in his class who, at the age of four, wanted to be a park ranger. Casey, a well-known author of computer game guides, is a member of NWF's Heralds of Nature society, and is a role model to his generation. Living on the banks of Washington's Snoqualmie River, Casey believes that we must be vigilant in protecting the health of our rivers and streams. From supporting the NWF Stream Restoration program to keeping his backyard according to the guidelines of NWF's Backyard Wildlife Habitat program to joining NWF's Northwest Regional Advisory Council, Casey gives of his time and resources and is making a big difference in NWF's work. Casey is also a strong proponent of environmental education. "We need to give young kids a chance to experience the wonders of nature," and the rest will take care of itself.

