

# 2019 VICTORY REPORT



Western  
Environmental  
Law Center

*These victories are YOUR victories. Thank you.*



Erik Schlenker-Goodrich  
Executive Director

As a key supporter of the Western Environmental Law Center, you share the credit for the incredible run of success we have experienced so far this year. It's been a very exciting time, and I want to catch you up on that success while providing some broader perspective regarding our full portfolio of legal advocacy across the American West.

The victories in this special report demonstrate the impact of your donation—your support is leading to positive, on-the-ground changes across the West right now. And this report illustrates our capacity to use the full power of the law to protect our wildlife, land, air, and water as well as our commitment to building ecological and community resilience in the face of climate change.

We hope you're proud of these victories and excited about what this series of wins portends for the future and health of the American West. You, our loyal supporters, made these victories possible. All of us at WELC would like to express our deep gratitude for your dedication to preserving the American West's natural heritage and for your generous support—*thank you!*



### DEFENDING WASHINGTON'S WOLVES

Our recent series of victories began just before the start of the New Year when a federal court ruled in our favor and blocked Wildlife Services—a virtually invisible agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture that exterminates wildlife—from killing wolves in Washington state.



### KEEPING MONTANA'S RIVERS AND STREAMS CLEAN

In March, we prevented the Rosebud Coal Mine—which feeds the 2,000-megawatt Colstrip coal-fired power plant—from dumping toxic metals and other harmful pollutants into Montana's waters without acceptable limits. This win holds the fossil fuel industry accountable for its pollution and keeps Montana's waters healthy for communities, fish, and other aquatic species.



### YOUTHS SECURE LANDMARK CLIMATE CHANGE VICTORY

In April, a court ordered the Washington State Department of Ecology to create a carbon emissions reduction rule in 2016 and make recommendations to the state legislature on science-based greenhouse gas reductions in the 2017 legislative session. Our victory is particularly sweet because our clients—a group of incredible kids—got the court to affirm that Washington has a public trust duty to address climate change.



### BIG WIN FOR ICONIC WOLVERINES

We secured a huge victory in April for the 250-300 wolverines remaining in the lower 48 states. We challenged the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision not to protect the animal under the Endangered Species Act and the judge declared that the time to protect wolverines is now.



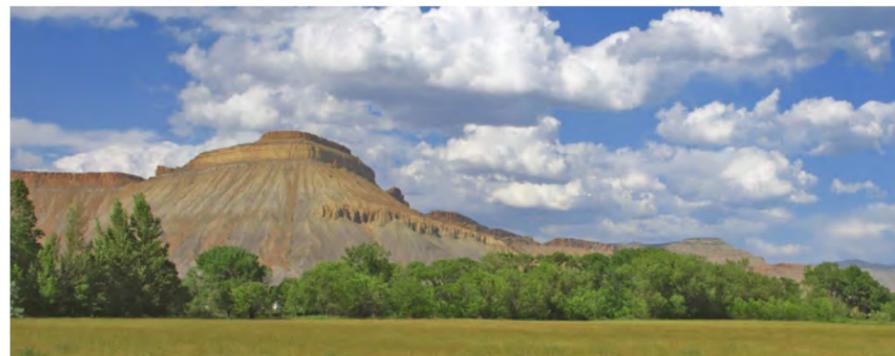
### PROTECTING WILD SALMON

This spring, we safeguarded wild salmon by successfully defending a five-year moratorium on suction dredge mining in Oregon's rivers and streams. Mining interests have appealed the court's decision and we will continue fighting to solidify our victory to protect Oregon's wild fish.



### PRESERVING THE SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST

At the end of April, we defended terrestrial and aquatic life—as well as broader forest integrity—when we scored a legal victory protecting the Santa Fe National Forest from irresponsible off-road vehicle use. This win upheld the Forest Service's decision to reduce the number of acres open to cross-country motorized travel from 443,848 acres to 41 acres and the routes open to motorized use on the forest from 7,832 miles to 2,463 miles.



### COLORADO FRACKING PLAN BLOCKED

In May, we successfully halted a 108-well, 26,000-acre fracking project that would produce 8.7 million barrels of oil in western Colorado. We forced BLM's state director to send the project back to the drawing board to analyze the impacts of hydraulic fracking on the environment. This win is part of our larger legal campaign to force BLM to take a hard look at the environmental harms associated with fracking on our public lands.



### REDUCING GREENHOUSE GASES

We are working with the White House and federal agencies to craft our nation's first-ever federal limits on methane pollution. Thanks to our advocacy, BLM proposed a rule that should be completed by the end of 2016 to cut methane pollution from oil and gas operations on public lands.



GuideStar Exchange Program gave WELC its highest rating—a Gold Level Participant. GuideStar rates nonprofit transparency on a national scale.



Support WELC at [westernlaw.org/donate](http://westernlaw.org/donate). For other giving options or questions, contact David Lawlor, Director of Development, (541) 255-0209 or [lawlor@westernlaw.org](mailto:lawlor@westernlaw.org).



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**Western  
Environmental  
Law Center**

We are a nonprofit, public interest environmental law firm that uses the power of the law to safeguard the wildlife, wildlands, and communities of the American West.

### Office Locations

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**The** victories in this special report are your victories and illustrate the impact of your support. In partnership together we have accomplished so much and we are making real progress right now toward a healthier, more resilient West.

Wolves, wolverines, salmon, and our public lands: we're bringing them back. Climate change and our transition away from fossil fuels: we're leading the way.

Thank you for your support and your dedication to defending the West!

