

2015 DOCKET



Defending an Icon of the West

TAKING A STAND FOR IMPERILED GRAY WOLVES

Wolves are making a comeback in Washington, but still only 68 individuals are estimated to live in the state. To protect these wolves, we filed a lawsuit against USDA's Wildlife Services, a stand-alone federal extermination program that kills roughly 4 million animals each year. We are challenging Wildlife Services' authority to investigate livestock depredations, trap wolves, and when authorized, to kill wolves via aerial gunning and shooting. Our goal is to stop Wildlife Services' harmful involvement in managing Washington's wolves.

PROTECTING WOLVERINES, LYNX & SALMON

- Challenging the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's decision not to add wolverines to the Endangered Species List.
- Fighting the USFWS decision to exclude significant portions of critical habitat necessary for Canada lynx.
- Protecting the West Coast's wild salmon and steelhead from habitat destruction, harmful dams, and competition with hatchery-bred fish.
- Defending grizzlies in Montana's Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem.



KEEP CHACO SACRED

SAVING GREATER CHACO FROM HARMFUL FRACKING

We filed a lawsuit and are engaged in cutting-edge legal advocacy to protect the greater Chaco Canyon region from irresponsible fracking for shale oil. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987, Chaco Canyon in northern New Mexico is considered the cultural heart of the American Southwest and is the sacred ancestral homeland of the Hopi and Pueblo people. The Bureau of Land Management, which oversees the public lands where fossil fuel development is proposed, continues to hastily approve fracking projects in the greater Chaco region despite admitting that it has never analyzed the impacts of fracking on the area's air, water, land, or local communities. BLM is also fast-tracking approval of the Piñon Pipeline, which would carry up to 50,000 barrels of oil per day out of the San Juan Basin where Chaco Canyon is located. Our goals are to protect greater Chaco's land, air, and water from fracking, to stop the Piñon Pipeline, and to safeguard the living human communities that call this region home and have already been negatively impacted by the legacy of fossil fuel development in the San Juan Basin.

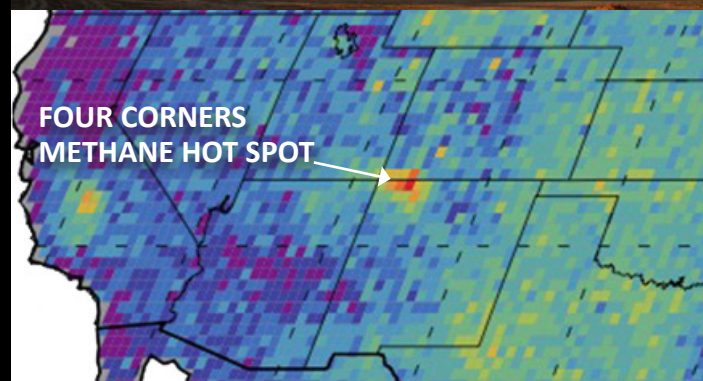




KEEP CHACO STELLAR

LEADING THE FIGHT ON METHANE POLLUTION

We are leading a far-reaching national campaign to reduce methane waste on our public lands. Methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change, is leaking into our atmosphere from drilled wells, compressor stations, and processing plants. A “methane hot spot” found by NASA in the Four Corners region illustrates the problem’s severity. Our goal is to revolutionize the way the oil and gas industry operates and to force the industry to adopt cost-effective technologies to capture leaked methane. The Bureau of Land Management will release a draft methane reduction plan later this year and our advocacy will be integral to ensure the strongest possible plan. Our work to rein in methane pollution will help protect special places such as Chaco Canyon, where intensely dark night skies make it one of the nation’s prime stargazing sites and earned it an International Dark Sky Park certification. BLM wants to allow fracking at the edge of Chaco Canyon, which would result in gas flaring, light pollution, and impaired celestial observations. We are challenging BLM’s fracking plans in court to keep Chaco’s night sky dark.





Preserving Wilderness at Crater Lake

STOPPING THE RECKLESS BYBEE TIMBER SALE

We filed a lawsuit to stop the U.S. Forest Service's Bybee Timber Sale, which allows the logging of about 16,000 acres of Oregon's Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. The project is located in the proposed Crater Lake Wilderness Area, at the edge of Crater Lake National Park. The combination of road building and logging would disqualify the area from wilderness protection status. In addition, the famed wolf OR-7, his mate, and his pups are living in the area of the timber sale and the wolf family faces potential harm if logging goes forward and destroys surrounding habitat.

SAVING OUR CLIMATE, RIVERS & WILDLANDS

- Fighting coal, oil, and gas in Montana, New Mexico, Washington, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.
- Opposing a dangerous natural gas pipeline proposed for southern Oregon.
- Working to remove the Enloe Dam, which blocks upstream passage for wild salmon on Washington's beautiful Similkameen River.
- Challenging the harmful Tennessee Creek Timber Sale in Colorado's San Isabel National Forest.



GuideStar gathers and distributes information about every IRS-registered nonprofit organization. GuideStar's Exchange Program, which rates nonprofit transparency on a national scale, certified WELC as a Gold Level participant, the program's highest rating. This rating reflects our commitment to the industry's highest ethical standards.



Working with the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, we balance and offset our environmental footprint by purchasing Green-e Energy Certified Renewable Energy Certificates, Verified Carbon Offsets for all our air and car travel, and Water Restoration Certificates® that restore water to critical rivers and streams.



To take part in our monthly giving program or to become a legacy donor, or if you have any questions about the impact of your gift, please contact David Lawlor, Director of Development, at (541) 255-0209 or at lawlor@westernlaw.org.



Photos: Wolf by [gnagelliStockPhoto](#); Chaco ruins by John Fowler; Chaco stars by Colorado CJ; Chaco landscape by Steve Corbato; Pipeline by [GregorBisterliStockPhoto](#); Flare by Adam Cohn; Methane map by NASA; Crater Lake by Yumian Deng.



The Western Environmental Law Center is 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.