Mary Oliver, in her iconic poem, The Summer Day, asks us to answer a fundamental question: “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” Working with you, we’ve answered this question over our 23-year history by building a legacy of conservation that we can all be proud of, and 2015 was no different.

As our annual report shows, we’ve made great strides. But as we celebrate 2015, we also look to the future through the lens of resiliency. That is, the ability of ecological and community systems to withstand, bounce back from, and effectively respond to ecological and community threats, like fossil fuel exploitation, degradation of wildlife, and climate change.

Through the lens of resiliency, we see an incredible opportunity: to imagine and then build a future where our children can and will thrive in a world grounded in wisdom, equity, and beauty. Because of your support, this future looks ever brighter and ever more possible. Thank you.

MISSION:
We use the power of the law to safeguard the wildlife, wildlands, and communities of the American West.

In 2015, we worked in all 11 Western states providing our legal services to more than 155 clients—for free. Thank you for making this possible!
YOUR SUPPORT RESULTS IN REAL, ON-THE-GROUND PROTECTIONS FOR THE WILD CREATURES AND PLACES THAT MAKE THE WEST SO SPECIAL.

VICTORY! SAVING FORESTS, SPOTTED OWLS & SALMON

WELC was appalled when the government approved a 50-year plan to intensify logging in northern spotted owl and salmon habitat, granting permission to kill endangered species and log old-growth forest on 150,000 acres in California. We stopped that plan, protecting owls, old-growth forest, and salmon.

VICTORY! SCIENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT PREVAILS

We have defended science-based forest planning for decades. In 2015, we fought back when the extractive industries challenged provisions requiring the Forest Service to use science and biology when creating new forest management plans. The court threw out industry’s case and science is still safe in our forests.

RESTORING RIVERS & FISH

WELC is working to open ~200 miles of steelhead habitat, potentially allowing the fish to be removed from the endangered species list. We’re challenging an attempt to restore power generation at Enloe Dam on the Similkameen River in Washington, where we also want to save the community from bearing the costs of an uneconomic hydroelectric project.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

In Washington, industrial dairies known as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) pollute groundwater and surface waters including Puget Sound. We’re contending with the formidable agricultural industry to protect salmon, public health, and jobs by securing strong Clean Water Act pollution protections for the state.

VICTORY! SONORAN DESERT

Arizona’s Sonoran Desert National Monument is famous for its saguaro cacti and archaeological relics. But target shooting, allowed throughout the monument, resulted in damage to centuries-old cacti and even more long-lived petroglyphs. WELC won a case forcing managers to reconsider the policy allowing shooting in the monument.

VICTORY! SAVING LYNX AND WOLVERINE FROM TRAPPING

WELC attorneys successfully tag-teamed indiscriminate trapping in Montana and Idaho this year. Thanks to our legal advocacy, Montana has adopted new, common-sense rules to prevent accidental trapping of endangered Canada lynx and wolverine, and we are pushing Idaho to do the same.

VICTORY! SAVING WILDLIFE & WILD PLACES

SUSAN JANE BROWN, ATTORNEY
WILDLANDS & WILDLIFE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Portland, Oregon

“Healthy rivers, forests, wildlife, and communities make the Pacific Northwest a crown jewel of the Americas. We’re working hard to protect that legacy.”

“Similkameen River, WA. We’re working to restore the natural flow of this river.”

“Western Environmental Law Center 2015 Annual Report”

2015 ANNUAL REPORT
JOHN MELLGREN, ATTORNEY
Eugene, Oregon

“It felt amazing to be one of the first people and organizations to successfully limit the killing power of Wildlife Services—and we're not done yet.”
OUR LEGAL TEAM IS WORKING TO TRANSITION THE AMERICAN WEST AWAY FROM POLLUTING FOSSIL FUELS AND TOWARD CLEAN, RENEWABLE ENERGY.

LAURA KING, ATTORNEY
Helena, Montana

“1 am proud to be part of the team that in 2015 kept more than half a billion tons of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere and pointed the way to a cleaner energy future.”

VICTORY! YOUTH & CLIMATE
WELC helped some brave kids challenge the state of Washington on climate change. Our advocacy spurred the state to finally take action against greenhouse gas emissions through a landmark rulemaking process. Next, we will work to ensure emissions targets reflect the best available science so these actions make a real difference.

PROTECTING GREATER CHACO CANYON FROM FRACKING
We’re not letting up in our quest to protect Greater Chaco’s people, cultural resources, and environment from fracking. Our attorneys are arguing for an injunction on all drilling in the area. The greatest concentration of new drilling permits is just outside Chaco Canyon—a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

CUTTING METHANE EMISSIONS
Nearly a decade of WELC advocacy came to a crescendo when the Bureau of Land Management proposed a rule that would limit methane emissions from the oil and gas industry. Methane wasted from drilling on public lands represents the climate pollution from 14 coal-fired power plants and $227 million of wasted tax revenue each year.

VICTORY! DRILLING PREVENTED IN COLORADO
We have battled plans to lease and develop public lands in Colorado’s fertile North Fork Valley for oil and gas since 2011. Each year since, we have beaten back new proposals and 2015 was no different—thanks to our efforts, the Forest Service withdrew its approval for drilling in the Gunnison National Forest.

STOPPING A LNG PIPELINE & TERMINAL IN OREGON
WELC continues to fight the Jordan Cove and Pacific Connector LNG terminal and pipeline, which would be the largest single emitter of greenhouse gases in the state if it were constructed. We are bringing our expertise to defeat—once and for all—this project that would harm communities and the environment.

VICTORY! MONTANA COAL MINE EXPANSION HALTED
In the Bull Mountains, we kept 170 million tons of coal in the ground. That equates to half a billion tons of carbon dioxide staying out of our atmosphere. We proved the mining company’s analysis violated the law, striking a victory for clean water, healthy air, and resilient communities.

BUILDING OUR CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

Together, we can achieve a legacy of conservation we can all be proud of.

WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER 2015 ANNUAL REPORT
We care deeply about public health as well as environmental protection. That’s why WELC has repeatedly taken on northern New Mexico’s Navajo Mine and Four Corners Power Plant complex—among the most notorious for coal contamination in the country. Most recently, we worked to hold operators accountable for mercury pollution from burning coal.

In March 2015, we convinced a federal court to reject a permit to expand Navajo Mine that would have allowed strip mining of 12.7 million tons of dirty coal. This helped keep almost 35 million tons of carbon dioxide out of our atmosphere. In an important case linking coal mining with coal combustion, we successfully argued that the expansion would have violated the National Environmental Protection Act by ignoring toxic mercury pollution from burning the coal.

Unfortunately, in December 2015, the Office of Surface Mining issued a revised decision approving a plan to keep Navajo Mine and the associated Four Corners Power Plant operating through 2041 despite impacts from coal toxins to communities, the San Juan River Basin, its ecosystems, and endangered wildlife.

Therefore, that same month, we sent a notice of intent to sue over the plan. It’s clear that this complex can’t operate in compliance with the law, and with your support, WELC will keep hammering these peddlers of dirty energy to help spur the renewable energy transition we so profoundly need.

CASE HIGHLIGHT: PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM COAL

WE KEPT OVER 12 MILLION TONS OF COAL IN THE GROUND BY BLOCKING EXPANDED COAL MINING AT THE NAVAJO MINE IN NEW MEXICO.

SHILOH HERNANDEZ, ATTORNEY
Helena, Montana

“Burning coal is the greatest threat to the livability of our planet. WELC uses the power of the law to accelerate our transition to clean, renewable energy sources—a moral obligation.”
Thank you for helping us to use our expertise in addressing the most pressing environmental issues facing the West.

Your support allows us to continue our operations and projects, and to continue our work to defend the West.

We deeply thank our loyal supporters who included WELC in their estate plans.

We are grateful to everyone that supports our work to defend the West.

We are committed to preserving the natural places of the American West and to ensuring that future generations experience the same love and wonder that we feel for those places.

For more information about our work, please visit our website at www.welc.org.
“I sleep better knowing that WLEC is defending the West’s wildlife and natural resources and is truly making a difference for future generations.”

Robert Clayton Reminger and Ruth Wolflin
Samuel R. Jewell
Heidi S. Jochem and Craig A. Jensen
Bruce A. Jaffe
Carolyn Johnson, M.D. and
Kevin Russell Cook
Emily Kudic
Eulia and George Johnson
Greg Johnson
Jacinthy Johnson
Marilyn Margery Johnson
R.N. and D.V. Johnson
Jacalyn Johnson
Eulia and George Johnson
Eulia S. Johnson
Grace Johnson
Jacinthy Johnson
Garr Johnson
Lee Johnson
Doris Johnson
Kathyl Johnson
Anita Johnson
Kathy Johnson
Benton Johnson
Kathy Johnson
John Hirschi
Kathleen Johnson
Kathleen Johnson
New Mexico’s
the Rio Grande’s
water resources
and policy reform
action in defense of
New Mexico's
statewide water quality
standards and
advocacy for the protection
of the Rio Grande's headwaters.

“we are proud to support WLEC’s place-based legal and policy approach to water resource action in defense of New Mexico’s statewide water quality standards and advocacy for the protection of the Rio Grande’s headwaters.”

Robert Clayton Reminger and Ruth Wolflin
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action in defense of New Mexico's statewide water quality standards and advocacy for the protection of the Rio Grande's headwaters.
Climate change is the defining issue of our generation and our response to this challenge will define the energy future. It is an honor and a privilege to serve on WELC’s Board. WELC’s stellar staff brings passion, vision, and commitment to all the issues that challenge the West. WELC is essential to defending the best and fighting for a clean energy future.

Thomas Singer, Ph.D.
WELC Senior Policy Advisor
Santa Fe, New Mexico

“It is an honor and privilege to serve on WELC’s Board.”

Rita Babauta Kiley
Kevin Kitchener and Mary Song
Ruth J. Kieser
Adam C. J. Klein
Charles Nelson Kleinhans
Adam C. J. Klein
Ruth J. Kistler
Rita Babauta Kiley
Ernest J. and Cindy Scott

Frank Lewin
David S. Lewis
Helen Kay Ledyard
William Z. Lidicker, Jr.
Carmen and Stephen Lieurance
Lisong and Ida Lieb
Mona M. Lim
Kathryn and Richard Dambro
James J. and Eileen D. Ludwig
Jonathan Luchs

Sarah Leviner and Robert Emanuel
Lynne L. Lowery
Martin W. and Elizabeth A. Mizell
Arthur Morley

Jon Klingel
Charles Nelson Kleinhans
Michael Krumper
Ellen B. Kritzman
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Lauretta and William Koopmann
Sandra Koenig
Andrew B. Knox

Lisa H. and Elizabeth A. McDermott
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Lucy and Robert Goetz

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Kathryn L. Owens
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Karen S. Patterson
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Julia A. Phalen
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Stephen M. and Hill Paskins
Mark and Martha Pavlat
Cyril Y. Peck
David A. Philip
Danton R. Phillips
Susan S. and Roger S. Peirce
Mark Plagge
M. Teresa Piaual
Nancy Pitlado
David and Kay Pollock
Constance Pren
Dan and Nancy Potter
Alan Powell
S. Premena
Dana L. Person
Polly P. Petersen
F. Redgren
Linda J. Perry

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[Image 1062x368 to 1225x523]
Our work would not be possible without your dedicated support. Thank you.
As a public interest law firm, we do not charge clients and partners for services, but rely instead on charitable gifts from individuals, families, and foundations to achieve our mission. You can help defend the West at www.westernlaw.org/donate

**WELC is GuideStar Gold Certified**

GuideStar gathers and shares information about every IRS-registered nonprofit. GuideStar’s Exchange Program rates nonprofit transparency on a national scale and certified WELC as a Gold Level participant, their highest rating. This reflects our commitment to the industry’s highest ethical standard and our dedication to organizational transparency.

Our Green Policy and Commitment to Sustainability

We make organizational choices to reflect our values of defending the West. 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.

> **Your Gift is Fully Tax-Deductible**
> Your donation to the Western Environmental Law Center is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes. WELC is a nonprofit organization with Federal Tax ID Number 93-1010269.

> **Other Ways to Give**
> We offer a variety of giving options including monthly giving; will, trust, and estate plans; charitable gift annuities; tribute gifts; and more. Please contact our director of development for details at 541-255-0209.

> **Donor Privacy Policy**
> We value our donors’ privacy. This is our pledge to you: The Western Environmental Law Center will never sell, rent, or trade the addresses or contact information of our donors. You can trust us to keep your information safe.

To learn more about our work defending the West and the impact of your donation, visit www.westernlaw.org.

You can sign up for our email newsletter at www.westernlaw.org/sign-up and find us on Facebook and Twitter!
FINANCIAL REPORT

2015 REVENUES
Program Services $575,783
Foundation Grants $798,787
Contributions $375,129
Investment & Other Income $15,514
TOTAL $1,765,213

2015 EXPENDITURES
Program $1,442,434
Administration $204,903
Fundraising $110,477
TOTAL $1,757,814

Thank you for partnering with us to make the American West such a truly special place—both today and in years to come.


OUR STAFF ARE IN OREGON, WASHINGTON, NEW MEXICO, AND MONTANA

A complete audited financial report will be available in August.