

VICTORY REPORT



Western
Environmental
Law Center

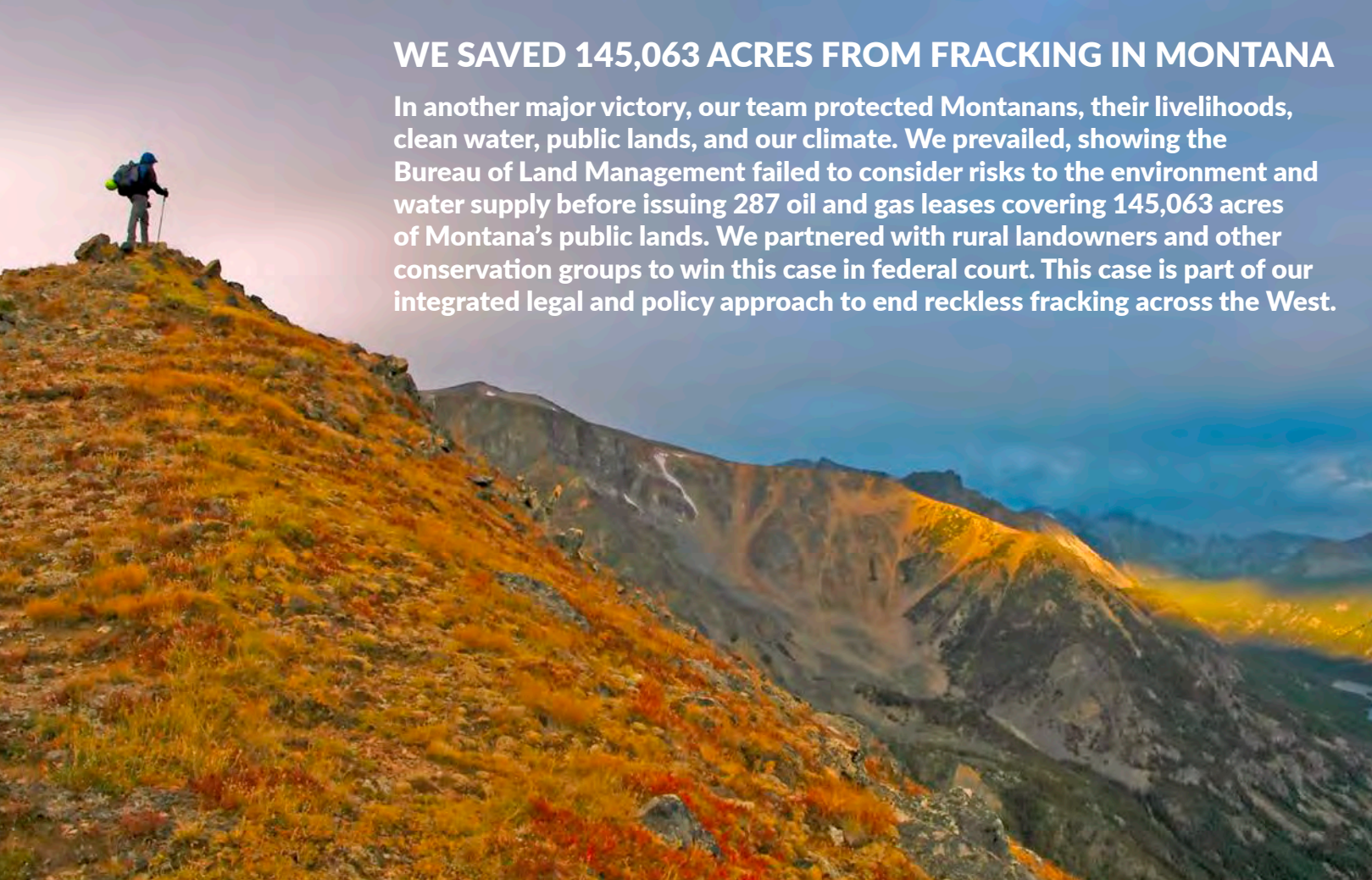
This is a year like no other. We have faced unexpected challenges and change, all as the many pervasive layers of injustice in our country unfold. In these times and always, you can count on us to safeguard our environment and climate by holding our government and polluting industries accountable to the law. Our ability to succeed is unfaltering, through virtual court hearings and online advocacy, our dedicated and savvy team is still achieving significant victories. Despite the odds, we have won numerous cases this year that will have lasting benefits to wildlife, wildlands, and communities across the American West.

Thank you for your continued generosity—your support makes these victories possible.



Our legal action led to the closure of a massive coal-fired power plant and energy replacement with 100% renewables. Together, we are building a clean energy future.

We represented local advocates and Tribes among a coalition of groups, and together we designed the winning renewable energy proposal. The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission voted unanimously to replace power from the toxic coal-fired San Juan Generating Station with 100% renewable energy and storage. Our victory will modernize power generation, improve public health, help address climate change, and allow for a just transition of the local economy.



WE SAVED 145,063 ACRES FROM FRACKING IN MONTANA

In another major victory, our team protected Montanans, their livelihoods, clean water, public lands, and our climate. We prevailed, showing the Bureau of Land Management failed to consider risks to the environment and water supply before issuing 287 oil and gas leases covering 145,063 acres of Montana's public lands. We partnered with rural landowners and other conservation groups to win this case in federal court. This case is part of our integrated legal and policy approach to end reckless fracking across the West.

WIN FOR ROADLESS AREAS AND WILDLIFE

The U.S. Forest Service can no longer build new roads and use mechanized logging equipment in an important roadless area on public lands near the Continental Divide in Montana's Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest. The area protected includes important big game habitat, as well as secure areas for grizzly bears, wolverine, and Canada lynx.



VICTORY OVER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S ATTEMPT TO CANCEL THE METHANE POLLUTION RULE

This is our third victory over the Trump administration's efforts to suspend, delay, or repeal the 2016 Bureau of Land Management methane waste rule. This win will have a direct impact on people, clean air, and the climate, both now and for generations to come, by reinstating nationwide limits on methane waste from oil and gas extraction on public lands. Our lawsuit also fought to address the longstanding problem of lost production royalties, caused by the industry's waste of publicly owned methane. This victory will help taxpayers reclaim about \$800 million in royalties over the next decade.



WINNING AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Environmental Group of the Year
from Law360

Top 10 Best Places to Work
from Outside Magazine

Highest 4-Star Rating
from Charity Navigator

These awards are testaments to the Western Environmental Law Center's effectiveness, creativity, and determination to protect our climate, communities, and environment.

WE PROTECTED THE DESERT TORTOISE

Thanks to our legal action, the Sonoran Desert tortoise will now be reconsidered for federal Endangered Species Act protections. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must take a new look at the imperiled animal's status in Arizona and issue a new decision that utilizes the best available science. During this time, the Sonoran Desert tortoise's "candidate species" status will be restored, elevating its protection while a new decision is pending.



FIGHTING TOXIC WATER POLLUTION IN NEW MEXICO

Los Alamos County, New Mexico, suffers from toxic water pollution, with some pollutants more than 14,000 times maximum public safety levels. Thanks to a lawsuit we filed, the community and wildlife in this area are on their way to having safer water. We took the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to court to force the agency to address the extremely high urban storm water pollution downstream from Los Alamos National Laboratory, including mercury, cyanide, PCBs, and gross alpha radiation. Our lawsuit spurred the EPA to finally take action after years of ignoring the problem. This is a victory for public health, water, and wildlife, and we'll continue to hold this federal agency accountable to the law.





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Oregon | Washington | New Mexico | Montana

We are a nonprofit, public-interest environmental law firm. We use the power of the law to safeguard the public lands, wildlife, and communities of the American West in the face of a changing climate. We represent more than 185 clients each year and do not charge for our services. We depend on charitable donations to achieve our mission.

WESTERNLAW.ORG

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2020 VICTORY REPORT

In an historic victory, our legal team ensured grizzlies in the Yellowstone region will remain protected by the Endangered Species Act.

The court rejected the Trump administration's attempt to put politics before science in determining the fate of these vulnerable bears.

This win for the Yellowstone bears is important for the recovery and survival of grizzly bears across the American West.

**READ THIS REPORT FOR MORE
VICTORIES YOU MADE POSSIBLE**

