

LEGAL DOCKET



We have work to do. And we are ready.

We are working with the Biden administration to craft a strong action plan to protect our environment and communities in the American West. Public lands are in jeopardy after four years of sensitive landscapes fracked, national monument protections slashed, and pollution regulations eliminated. This work is so urgent, we are not just readying to repair this damage—we have already started.

Our legal team is fighting to protect 3.5 million acres of public lands in Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico from oil and gas leases. We are challenging these leases in federal court and we are building on our past victories to secure even more big wins going forward.

In the coming year, our litigation will also focus on protecting the Greater Chaco region in New Mexico from reckless fracking. We will fight to protect public health and cultural heritage, and we are holding the oil and gas industry accountable for its destructive agenda.

Our attorneys will continue work to protect the fertile North Fork Valley in Colorado from oil and gas exploitation. Organic agriculture, recreation opportunities, and endangered wildlife abound in this area, and must not be sacrificed to expanded drilling and fracking.

With your support, we will meet the climate crisis by ending fossil fuel exploitation, protecting environmental justice communities, and transitioning to 100% clean, renewable energy.

**You make it possible
to defend the West—thank you!**





PROTECTING WESTERN WILDLIFE

Native wildlife such as wolves, grizzlies, wolverines, northern spotted owls, salmon, and Canada lynx are essential parts of what makes the West such a special place. Our team of attorneys is actively building legal cases to ensure these animals and their habitat receive the protections they need to thrive in the wild.

We are challenging federal agency decisions that harm Western wildlife and we are using legal tools to maximize the protections these animals receive under the Endangered Species Act.

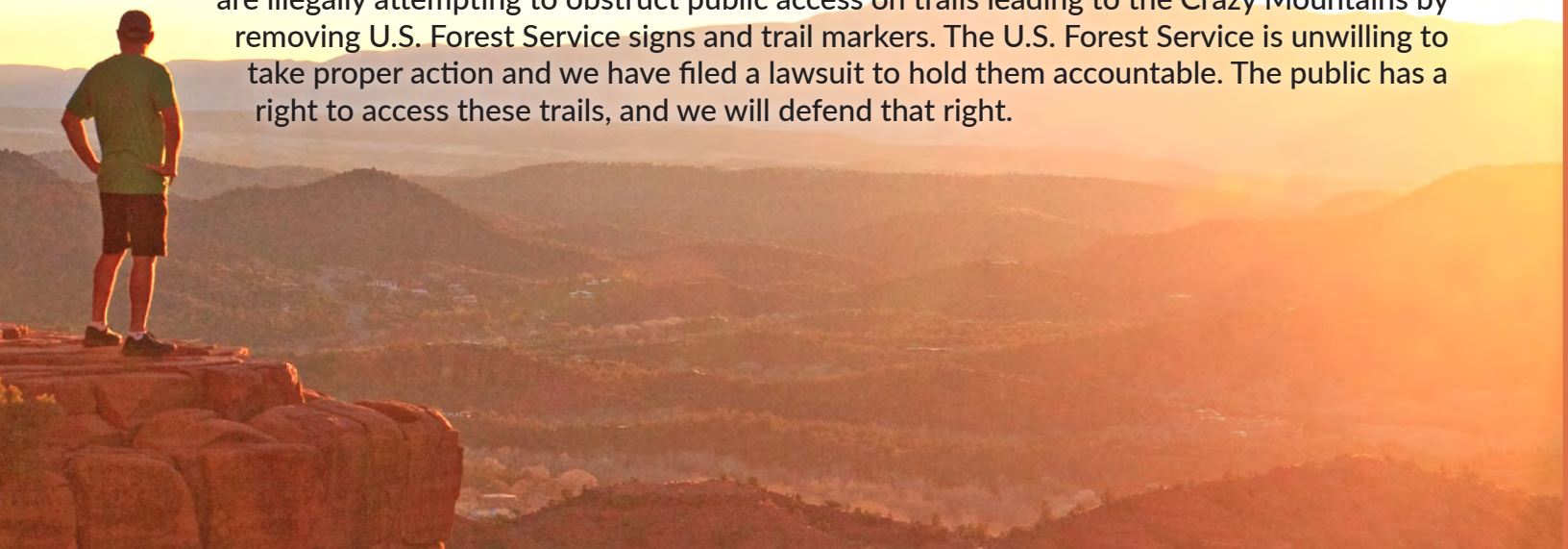
We continue to collaborate with expert scientists and our conservation partners to develop winning strategies to defend these iconic animals.

SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC LANDS ACROSS THE WEST

We will use the power of the law and the courts to hold the Biden administration accountable to its commitment to conserve 30% of the nation's lands and waters by 2030 as a means to address the intertwined climate and biodiversity crises.

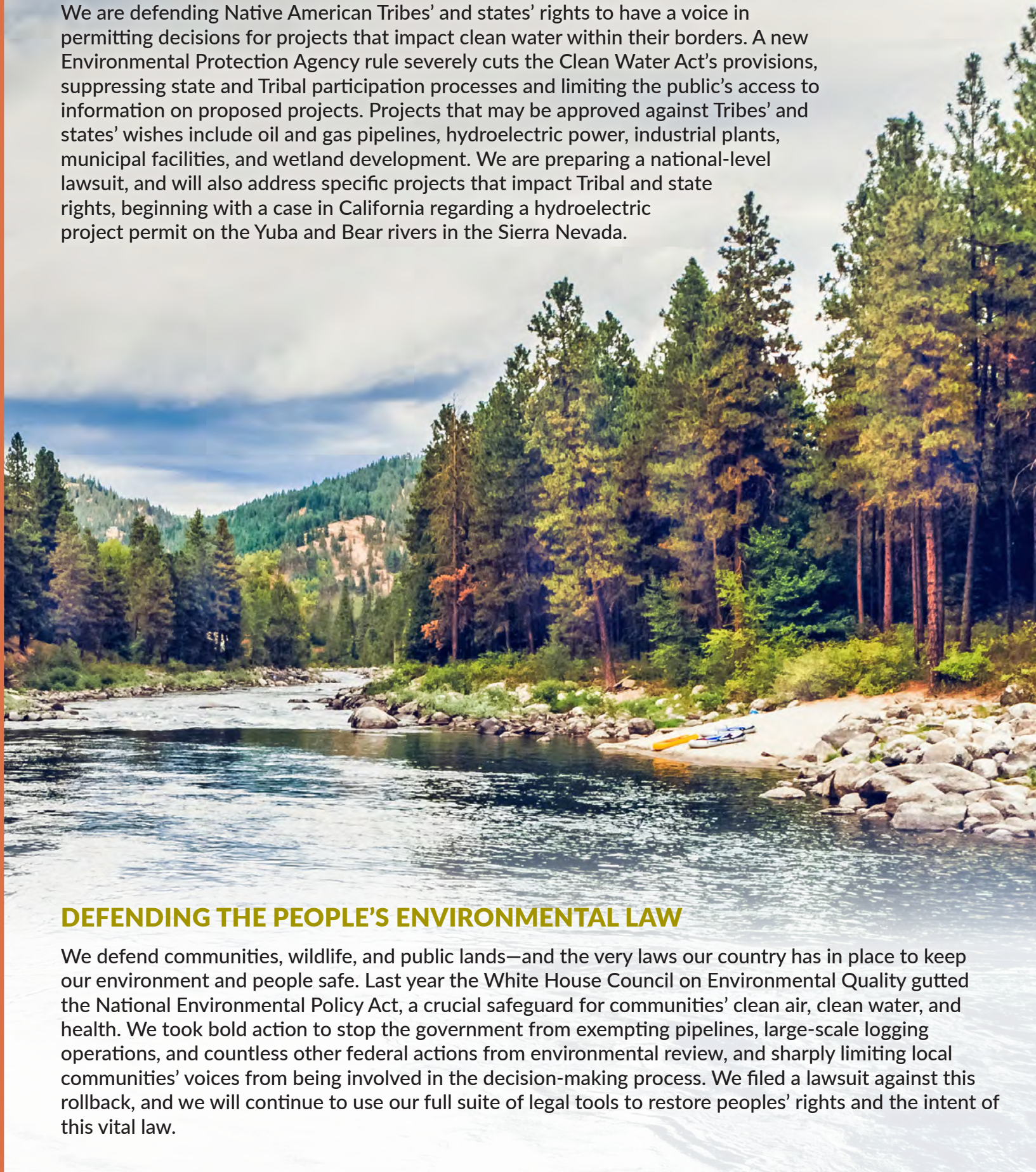
This year we will work to protect 270,000 acres of public lands in the Gila National Forest in New Mexico and the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest in Arizona from a massive, harmful livestock grazing project. Our legal action will protect water resources, wildlife, and wilderness from being detrimentally impacted by destructive, large-scale grazing on these lands.

In Montana, we are defending the public's right to access public lands. Certain landowners are illegally attempting to obstruct public access on trails leading to the Crazy Mountains by removing U.S. Forest Service signs and trail markers. The U.S. Forest Service is unwilling to take proper action and we have filed a lawsuit to hold them accountable. The public has a right to access these trails, and we will defend that right.



FIGHTING FOR TRIBES' AND STATES' CLEAN WATER RIGHTS

We are defending Native American Tribes' and states' rights to have a voice in permitting decisions for projects that impact clean water within their borders. A new Environmental Protection Agency rule severely cuts the Clean Water Act's provisions, suppressing state and Tribal participation processes and limiting the public's access to information on proposed projects. Projects that may be approved against Tribes' and states' wishes include oil and gas pipelines, hydroelectric power, industrial plants, municipal facilities, and wetland development. We are preparing a national-level lawsuit, and will also address specific projects that impact Tribal and state rights, beginning with a case in California regarding a hydroelectric project permit on the Yuba and Bear rivers in the Sierra Nevada.



DEFENDING THE PEOPLE'S ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

We defend communities, wildlife, and public lands—and the very laws our country has in place to keep our environment and people safe. Last year the White House Council on Environmental Quality gutted the National Environmental Policy Act, a crucial safeguard for communities' clean air, clean water, and health. We took bold action to stop the government from exempting pipelines, large-scale logging operations, and countless other federal actions from environmental review, and sharply limiting local communities' voices from being involved in the decision-making process. We filed a lawsuit against this rollback, and we will continue to use our full suite of legal tools to restore peoples' rights and the intent of this vital law.



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We are a nonprofit, public-interest environmental law center.
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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2021 LEGAL DOCKET

Canada lynx are in more trouble now in the American West than ever before. Due to climate change, related warming, and longer wildfire seasons, there are significant losses of lynx habitat in the few places that still support this wild cat.

Yet the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has worked against the best available science, delaying recovery planning for this vulnerable animal for nearly 20 years.

Our litigation and legal advocacy over these decades have kept in place existing protections for the rare lynx, but the agency needs to do more—much more. We recently filed a new lawsuit and are continuing to fight in federal court to ensure lynx and their habitat get the important protections they deserve, before it's too late.

**READ THIS REPORT TO LEARN ABOUT OUR 2021
CASES TO DEFEND PUBLIC LANDS, WILDLIFE, AND
COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE AMERICAN WEST.**

