

# VICTORY REPORT



Western  
Environmental  
Law Center

We hit the ground running this year and haven't stopped yet! Adapting to the challenges of these times, we continue to succeed in our mission to defend the public lands, wildlife, and communities of the western U.S. Using the full power of the law—and changing the law for the better when we need to—our legal team is making a lasting, on-the-ground difference. We are building new partnerships, focusing on equity, inclusion, and justice, and are growing stronger as an organization every single day to secure a thriving, resilient future.

With your support, we can celebrate victories spanning the forests and mountains of the Northern Rockies, the sunny Southwest, and the waters and rivers of the Pacific Northwest. We could not achieve these amazing results without you. All the victories featured in this special report are YOUR victories.

**WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT. THANK YOU FOR MAKING THESE HIGH-IMPACT WINS POSSIBLE!**



## **WE TOOK ON FACTORY FARMS—AND WON MONUMENTAL WIN FOR CLEAN WATER IN WASHINGTON STATE**

In an unprecedented court victory this summer, we forced the state of Washington to strengthen its waste discharge permits for factory farms to minimize contamination of Washington's waters and address the realities of climate change. We fought for 15 years to make factory farms in Washington adopt reasonable measures that reduce their massive and ongoing pollution of waterways in the state and in Puget Sound. This win will provide lasting benefits to the health of the communities, wildlife, and waters in this region.



# WE DEFEND THE WEST



## VICTORY FOR OWLS AND FORESTS IN OREGON

This fall we won a victory for forests and great gray owls in Oregon. We challenged a timber sale called Griffin Half Moon, a project that would have logged more than 900 acres home to perhaps the largest and most well-known population of great gray owls in southwest Oregon. The Bureau of Land Management's assessment did not consider the effects of logging on this at-risk owl and we are glad to have prevailed in the owl and forest's protection.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY WIN FOR NAVAJO AND COMMUNITY GROUPS IN NEW MEXICO

Our team of attorneys negotiated on behalf of Navajo and community groups to determine how an energy company, Avangrid, may merge with the local power company to speed a transition away from coal and toward renewable energy. In an outstanding win, we secured \$12.5 million in just transition funding to be allocated by our clients to impacted communities. In addition, the merger would bring 200 megawatts of renewable energy and storage on the Navajo Nation and a commitment to 150 full-time jobs.

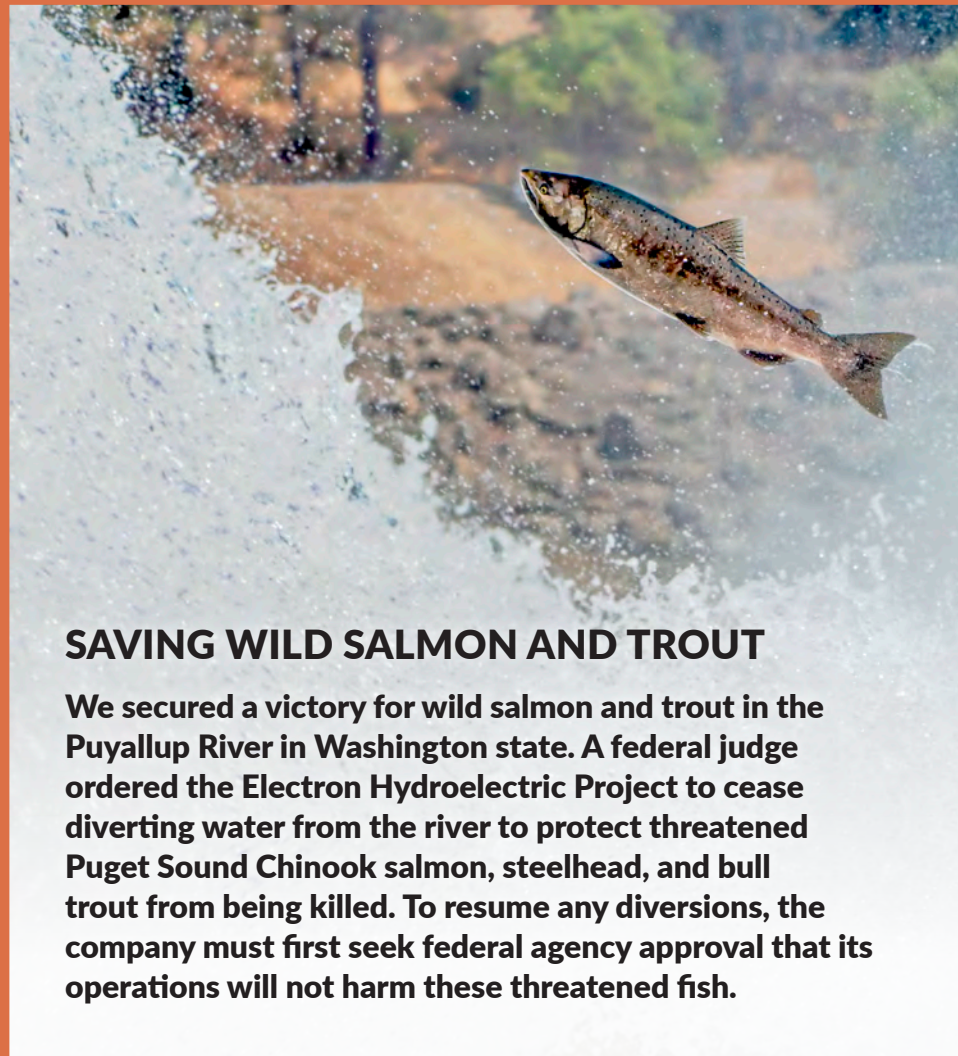


## KEEPING 85 MILLION TONS OF COAL IN THE GROUND

We won an important case against the expansion of the largest coal mine in Montana, the Spring Creek Mine. The judge found the federal government failed to address the increased climate and air pollution of more coal mining and burning as well as the environmental impacts of coal trains. This win keeps 85 million tons of coal in the ground from the projected 1,100-acre expansion.

## MARBLED MURRELET WIN

Marbled murrelets have declined dramatically due to climate change and extensive logging in Oregon's coast range. After years of our legal advocacy, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission increased marbled murrelet protections by reclassifying the birds from threatened to endangered under the state's Endangered Species Act. Finally, this seabird will receive the stronger protections it so desperately needs.



## SAVING WILD SALMON AND TROUT

We secured a victory for wild salmon and trout in the Puyallup River in Washington state. A federal judge ordered the Electron Hydroelectric Project to cease diverting water from the river to protect threatened Puget Sound Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout from being killed. To resume any diversions, the company must first seek federal agency approval that its operations will not harm these threatened fish.

## STOPPING FRACKING ON 3 MILLION ACRES IN COLORADO

Our legal team secured two more high-impact wins for our climate this year. We won a victory on the 20-year Grand Junction resource management plan, which would have allocated nearly 1 million acres for oil and gas leasing and nearly 4,000 new oil and gas wells. We also halted fracking on 45,000 acres of oil and gas leases in western Colorado. These leases were near three state parks, a migratory bird corridor, a special area for wildlife, recreation, and irrigation, and within a half-mile of a K-12 public school. With these wins and an earlier victory, the Bureau of Land Management has now halted all oil and gas leasing across two Field Offices while it revises land management plans governing about 2 million acres of public lands. We proved that oil and gas extraction should not be prioritized over the important values of wildlife, recreation, water, and climate protection.







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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 western U.S. in the face of a changing climate. We represent more than 195 clients each year and do not charge for our services. We depend on charitable donations to achieve our mission.

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## 2021 VICTORY REPORT

With your support, we won an important victory for grizzly bears and bull trout in Montana's Flathead National Forest. We prevented a forest plan from allowing increased road construction and logging in sensitive wildlife habitat for at least the next 15 years, and likely much longer.

Grizzlies and bull trout remain imperiled throughout their range. We will continue our legal advocacy so the essential habitat provided by the Flathead National Forest is not degraded by the threats roads and other development pose to the true recovery of such magnificent Western wildlife.

**READ THIS REPORT TO LEARN ABOUT OUR 2021 VICTORIES TO DEFEND WILDLIFE, PUBLIC LANDS, AND COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE WESTERN U.S.**

