

LEGAL DOCKET

Our team is growing, our advocacy is expanding, and we are making a larger impact on the environment and communities of the western U.S. than ever before. Read on for our most important cases in 2022.

DEFENDING CLEAN WATER

Cyanide does not belong in our water. Yet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington Department of Ecology allow industrial metal companies, the chemical industry, and wastewater treatment facilities to release dangerous levels of cyanide into Washington state's waters. Both agencies allow cyanide pollution levels known to harm endangered salmon and the orcas that depend on them. We are taking legal action to protect Washington's rivers and waters from this toxic pollution.

We are also challenging the EPA's failure to set limits on nitrogen pollution in Puget Sound. The Clean Water Act requires these pollution limits, and we are enforcing that law. The nitrogen pollution is mainly from sewage treatment centers and causes a wide range of ecological degradation including massive algae blooms. This case is part of our larger campaign to protect the communities, wildlife, and waters of Puget Sound.

In New Mexico, we are partnering with Tribes, community organizations, individuals, and local government to build support to secure federal protections for hundreds of miles of rivers. We are advocating for some of the state's most treasured rivers to be designated as Outstanding National Resource Waters, a distinction reserved for the most ecologically significant waters in the nation. This protection will shield these waters from any new industrial development for years to come.

Water is life, and together we will protect them both.

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



**Western
Environmental
Law Center**

DEFENDING ANCIENT FORESTS

We are continuing our decades of work defending ancient forests in the Pacific Northwest with a multitude of legal cases in Oregon and California to protect forest habitat for spotted owls, fishers, and tree voles. We are challenging the timber industry's logging plan covering more than 1.5 million acres in northern California and the Sierra Nevada that would allow the killing of hundreds of owls over the next 50 years. Our attorneys are also using legal advocacy in and out of the courtroom to protect forests from harmful timber sales across Oregon.

SAFEGUARDING WILDLIFE

We are protecting imperiled wildlife native to the western U.S. including wolves, grizzlies, salmon, and more. We are in court to protect gray wolves across the nation by reinstating their status as federally endangered species. We are also taking action to give Mexican wolves their best chance at recovering in the Southwest. We are using the law to ensure the wolves' recovery plans are based on science and to protect the lands that support these wolves.



FIRST FOODS-CENTERED CONSERVATION

As part of a new, growing area of our advocacy, we are researching the First Foods of Pacific Northwest Tribes. First Foods provide the cultural backbone of many Tribes and their communities and require healthy, thriving ecosystems to survive and flourish. By learning about the cultural and spiritual ties Indigenous people have to traditional sources of sustenance, we hope to form and strengthen partnerships with Tribes and Indigenous organizations in the Northwest for mutual benefit. We recognize our common interests in protecting the land, waters, wildlife, and communities of the Northwest.



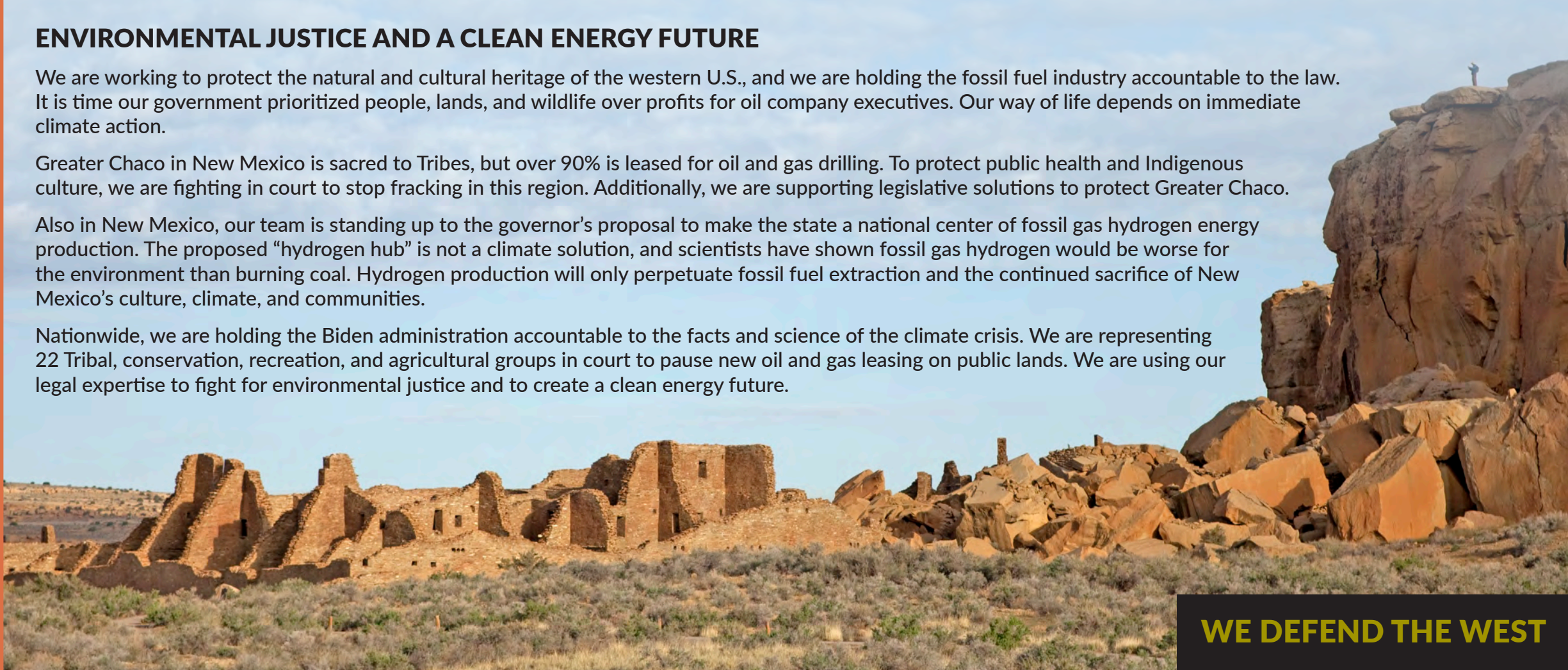
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

We are working to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the western U.S., and we are holding the fossil fuel industry accountable to the law. It is time our government prioritized people, lands, and wildlife over profits for oil company executives. Our way of life depends on immediate climate action.

Greater Chaco in New Mexico is sacred to Tribes, but over 90% is leased for oil and gas drilling. To protect public health and Indigenous culture, we are fighting in court to stop fracking in this region. Additionally, we are supporting legislative solutions to protect Greater Chaco.

Also in New Mexico, our team is standing up to the governor's proposal to make the state a national center of fossil gas hydrogen energy production. The proposed "hydrogen hub" is not a climate solution, and scientists have shown fossil gas hydrogen would be worse for the environment than burning coal. Hydrogen production will only perpetuate fossil fuel extraction and the continued sacrifice of New Mexico's culture, climate, and communities.

Nationwide, we are holding the Biden administration accountable to the facts and science of the climate crisis. We are representing 22 Tribal, conservation, recreation, and agricultural groups in court to pause new oil and gas leasing on public lands. We are using our legal expertise to fight for environmental justice and to create a clean energy future.





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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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We are using the power of the law to
help wolverines receive the federal
Endangered Species Act protection
they need to recover in the wild.
Exceedingly rare in the contiguous
U.S., wolverines number only about
250-300. Yet the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service repeatedly refuses to provide
adequate protections for wolverines.
We are taking strong legal action to
prove science cannot be ignored, and
to give wolverines the immediate
protections they need to survive.



**OPEN AND READ ABOUT OUR MOST
IMPORTANT CASES FOR 2022 >>**