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ANNUAL REPORT





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Defenders of Wildlife is a national, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection of all native wild animals and plants in their natural communities.



Jamie Rappaport Clark, President
Donald Barry, Executive Vice President

Annual Report Staff
Editor: Heidi Ridgley
Art Director: Jen Lee
Writer: Krista Schlyer

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1130 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-4604
202.682.9400

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DEFENDERS IN 2011 A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND PRESIDENT

The past year was a time of transition at Defenders, as Rodger Schlickeisen, our president for 20 years, retired. Rodger spearheaded some of the nation's most innovative wildlife initiatives, and our board honored him for his contributions to the organization and the larger conservation movement with the Defenders of Wildlife Legacy Award last fall.

We continue to stand strong and ready to tackle the many challenges facing wildlife

and habitats today. In a year when no assault seemed too bold, some members of Congress introduced anti-environmental bills by the dozen. With the help of our allies, supporters and members, Defenders deflected most threats. One of our greatest victories was defeating the so-called extinction rider. The rider would have eviscerated the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by preventing new species facing the prospect of extinction from obtaining the ESA's protections—at a time when we are losing wild species at 10,000 times the natural rate. And while some members of Congress sought to weaken the ESA, we sought ways to strengthen, modernize and broaden support for this landmark law. A strong ESA is one of our top priorities.

Over the past year, Defenders also fended off budget cuts for wildlife and environmental protection programs, including attempts to undermine policies to help wildlife adapt to climate change. Our renewable energy team worked with the Obama administration to shape the first-ever program for responsible solar-energy development on public lands,

with strong protections for wildlife and habitat. We did lose some battles, however, including the premature legislative delisting of the gray wolf in the Northern Rockies. This unfortunate occurrence underscores the importance of our ongoing efforts to prevent conflicts between humans and wildlife.

We remain grateful to Defenders' steadfast supporters who make all of our work possible. Your generosity, commitment and advocacy for the conservation of our nation's wildlife and wild places is critical to our success. With your support, Defenders is charting a course to ensure that wildlife populations in North America are secure and thriving and sustained by a healthy network of lands and waters for generations to come.

Signature of Victor Sher

Victor Sher
Chair, Board of Directors

Signature of Jamie Rappaport Clark

Jamie Rappaport Clark
President



Board chair Victor Sher (left) and Defenders' President Jamie Rappaport Clark (right) present the 2011 Wildlife Legacy Award to Rodger Schlickeisen (center) in recognition of 20 years of outstanding leadership.

"Jamie Rappaport Clark brings to the job an almost perfect combination of professional wildlife conservation experience and senior management skills, well honed by her seven years as executive vice president of Defenders of Wildlife, and before that in a number of other impressive conservation positions, including director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during some of that agency's most successful years. I am confident Defenders will continue to be a major conservation force under her leadership."

—Victor Sher, Chair of the Board



In October 2011, Jamie Rappaport Clark became president and CEO of Defenders of Wildlife after serving as executive vice president for seven years. A career biologist and leading expert on imperiled wildlife and the Endangered Species Act, Jamie was the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from 1997 to 2001. Under her leadership, two million acres were added to the National Wildlife Refuge System and 27 new refuges were established. She also oversaw the recovery of key endangered species such as the bald eagle, gray wolf and peregrine falcon.



# ABOUT DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

For more than six decades, Defenders of Wildlife has been a leading force in the protection of wildlife and wild lands. Using innovative, science-based approaches, we work from 10 field offices in North America to ensure that wildlife populations are secure and thriving, sustained by a diverse network of healthy forests, grasslands, mountains, deserts and waters. We believe that as a nation we have an ethical responsibility to be good stewards of the planet, to conserve all native species, to maintain the life-support functions of natural ecosystems and to protect a rich diversity of species for future generations.

# Defenders works to:

Defenders works across the country to safeguard and restore imperiled species and wildlife habitat. And we work with ranchers in areas where wolves range with livestock to show them it's possible for people to share the landscape with large carnivores.

REDWOOD TREES © LINDSAY KAJIJI



RANGE RIDERS © JOE WHITTLE

## Protect imperiled wildlife

- We are a steadfast champion of the Endangered Species Act, America's preeminent protection for imperiled wildlife.
- We fostered the return of the gray wolf to the wild in the West and remain vigilant in protecting the wolf and other imperiled species as essential components in healthy ecosystems.
- We help people live with wildlife and devise innovative coexistence programs that help promote the recovery of large predators and other wildlife, including wolves, grizzly bears, Florida panthers, black-footed ferrets and bison.

## Promote climate and renewable energy policies that benefit wildlife

- We help federal and state agencies, land trusts and other key stakeholders address the effects of climate change in their conservation and natural resources plans.
- We work with energy companies and the federal government to develop renewable energy that is "wildlife-friendly."

## Conserve and restore native habitat

- We safeguard the health and biodiversity of our public lands.
- We pursue strategies to decrease fragmentation and increase connectivity between public and private conservation lands.
- We advise and support private landowners, helping to maximize the impact of their conservation work.

POLAR BEARS © JOAN CAMBRAY





# Keeping the Endangered Species Act Effective

Picture a world without the bald eagle, the Florida panther, the gray wolf and the whooping crane. It seems inconceivable that such a world could exist, but if not for a singular moment in history—the passage of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973—that world would be all too real.

For nearly four decades, Defenders of Wildlife has used the ESA as the very cornerstone of our work: to demand a recovery plan for the faltering Mexican gray wolf, to protect nesting beaches of sea turtles and to fight for the future of polar bears in the face of climate change. We have leveraged the law to protect habitat for red-cockaded woodpeckers, to expand critical habitat for North Atlantic right whales and to protect the fragile eggs of piping plovers and sea turtles from off-road vehicles.

This law is effective and essential—a critical tool for responsible stewardship of the natural world. But despite its overwhelming bipartisan support in 1973 and being signed into law by President Richard Nixon, in the past two decades a vocal group of politicians have fixated on the destruction of this pillar of wildlife conservation. Consequently, in addition to fighting for vulnerable species using the ESA, we are fighting to preserve the act itself.

## Susan Wallace *Ensuring a voice for wildlife*



PHOTO COURTESY SUSAN WALLACE

Defenders' board member Susan Wallace was only four years old when she got her first glimpse of free-ranging bison with her father. Her passion for nature soon grew to include other species, and it didn't matter how big or how small. "Tadpoles and salamanders also fascinated me," she says. "I grew up in Pennsylvania on the edge of the woods by a stream in the Lehigh Valley, and I can't remember a time when a concern for wildlife wasn't in me." Susan went

on to become active in biodiversity conservation and has helped to protect a range of species and habitats over the past 25 years—starting with Pennsylvania's Tincum Creek, a waterway that is now a National Wild and Scenic River. In 2009, Susan was elected to the board of directors. "I am so honored to be part of Defenders," she says. "The work of the staff, from lobbying to protecting wildlife in the courts, is all so brilliantly conceived and executed." As chair of the board communications committee, Susan is helping to expand Defenders' outreach and engage the next generation through mobile messaging and social media, such as YouTube and Facebook. "We know top predators are important to ecosystems, and

we know how to spread that message," she says.

As chair of The Woodtiger Fund, which she established with her husband Bruce in 2009, Susan is deeply committed to safeguarding biodiversity from the effects of human activity. "I care about people, but I think that wild creatures get overshadowed and end up not getting the protections they deserve." Susan's passion has served Defenders' mission well. As Defenders' President Jamie Rappaport Clark puts it, "Susan provided early support for our work to protect and strengthen the Endangered Species Act, and is helping to make the act more effective in conserving biodiversity. This support was essential this past year, when it was under constant threat."



FLORIDA PANTHER © JOEL SARTORE/WWW.JOELSARTORE.COM

**“Defenders of Wildlife provided highly effective and timely advocacy in support of my amendment that successfully stopped the extinction rider on the House floor. Once again Defenders’ leadership in protecting the Endangered Species Act proved invaluable.”**

—Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.)

**The ESA has helped keep animals such as the Florida panther (above) and the piping plover (below) from going extinct. That's why Defenders fights so hard to ensure Congress keeps the law effective.**

## ESA Extinction Rider Defeated

There were almost as many anti-ESA bills introduced in August 2011 as in the previous four Congresses combined. Many of these bills came out of a Pandora's Box opened by a precedent-setting bill passed in May 2011, which removed protections for Northern Rockies gray wolves—the first time in the 38-year history of the ESA that politicians rather than scientists ended a species' protective status under the ESA.

Emboldened, anti-wildlife factions in Congress unleashed a torrent of anti-ESA bills, including the infamous “extinction rider,” which would have prevented new listings under the ESA and precluded any funding for designation of critical habitat. When House wildlife champion Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), Representative Mike Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) and others took on the fight to stop the rider, Defenders launched an intense campaign that included targeted advertising, e-mail alerts, phone banking, op-eds, 3,000 calls to House members and a letter to members of Congress signed by Defenders' President Jamie Rappaport Clark and three other former directors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in opposition to the rider.

The extinction rider ultimately was defeated by an overwhelming bipartisan majority—a critical win for wildlife. Energized by this win, Defenders went on to help block a dozen or more additional proposals to undermine endangered species, by chronicling them in our report, *The Endangered Species Act Under Attack*, spreading the word through media campaigns and helping our members participate in an ESA Lobby Day on Capitol Hill.



PIPING PLOVER © TOM VEZOV/INDEN PICTURES

**“The ESA is the most important law on the books for conserving wildlife and habitat. I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to work with my colleagues at Defenders, where we combine our expertise in law, policy and science to improve the effectiveness of the ESA. And I'm particularly excited about our work to develop incentives for landowners and federal agencies to conserve species before they are listed. Improving the ESA is one of the most important things we can do to preserve America's wildlife heritage.”**

—Jake (Ya-Wei) Li (right), whose work includes analyzing and developing policies on ESA listings and critical habitat designations, recovery planning, habitat conservation plans and safe harbor agreements.



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## Blueprint for the Future

The Endangered Species Act has a proven track record of success. But there are two very important reasons to make it even more effective. First, the current rate of extinctions for wild species demands that we redouble our conservation efforts. Second, opponents of the ESA are not going away, and they will exploit any weakness in the law.

With 251 species standing in line for ESA listing, we have to make the work of saving species more efficient. More than any other national conservation organization, Defenders is investing significant intellectual and political capital in improving the administration of the ESA. Over the past year we have developed effective ways for modernizing the act and are promoting the best of those ideas with government and private sector partners. For example, we are collaborating with other conservation organizations to help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develop a new approach to conserving ESA candidate species. The approach would create legal incentives for landowners and federal agencies to conserve candidate species before they are listed.

Our goal is to enhance conservation benefits for imperiled species on the ground, with a strong emphasis on promoting proactive conservation measures which prevent endangerment altogether. We are also promoting strategies to broaden support for the ESA and reduce the political pressure to weaken the law.



PROTECTING IMPERILED WILDLIFE

# Fighting for Endangered Species in the Field and in the Courts

Defenders' staff works directly on key endangered species to secure their recovery and to protect species before they become endangered in North America.

“The boost in numbers for Mexican gray wolves in 2011—58 wolves and six breeding pairs, up from 50 wolves and two breeding pairs the year before—signals that a new emphasis on partnerships among the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and ranchers is helping livestock and wolves better coexist.”



—Eva Sargent, Defenders' Southwest director and a member of the Federal Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Team.

MEXICAN GRAY WOLF © JOEL SARINDE/WWW.JOELSARINDE.COM



## Mexican wolf

Just two years ago, the prognosis for Mexican gray wolf recovery looked particularly grim. The wolf population had plummeted by 20 percent, and only 42 wolves remained in the wild. But in 2010 the wolf population grew—for the first time in four years—to 50 individuals, one of the most hopeful moments since the original 11 wolves were reintroduced in 1998. And the 2011 count climbed higher. The uptick signals that policy changes, including an end to excessive wolf removals and a reassertion of leadership for the recovery program by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), could be turning the tide for these wolves. Buoyed by this progress, we are furthering recovery by tackling the biggest cause of death for Mexican wolves—illegal killings—through our signature coexistence

program to reduce conflicts with ranchers. Defenders has been pressing for the reintroduction of more wolves to counterbalance high mortality rates. We are also working as a member of the Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Team to help develop a new wolf recovery plan since the original plan is almost 30 years old and has no clear goals.

Over the past year, we have been working to defeat attempts by members of Congress to remove federal protection for all wolves, including those in the Southwest. To help convey the message that people in the Southwest support Mexican wolf recovery, Defenders geared up our citizen media team, which placed more than 30 pro-wolf letters-to-the-editor in Arizona and New Mexico newspapers. Defenders also prompted pro-wolf editorials in the *Arizona Republic* and *Arizona Daily Sun*.

Thousands of Mexican gray wolves once roamed the Southwest prior to the 1900s. Today, there are just more than 50 individuals, making this wolf subspecies one of the most endangered mammals in North America.

HISTORIC AND CURRENT RANGE OF MEXICAN WOLVES



MEXICAN WOLVES BY THE NUMBERS as of March 2012



## Right whale

Protected under the Endangered Species Act since 1973, North Atlantic right whales cling to existence with only about 400 remaining. Despite the National Marine Fisheries Service's statement that the “loss of even a single individual may contribute to the extinction of the species,” these whales continue to die as a result of collisions with ships and entanglement in fishing gear. In 2011, two right whales died from fishing gear entanglement and at least seven additional new entanglements were reported. Yet the agency continues to allow these fisheries to operate without mandating that they use safer gear. Defenders continues to push for better protections, in part, by asking the federal court to hold the agency accountable for its inaction and noncompliance with the requirements of the ESA.



RIGHT WHALE © CENTER FOR COASTAL STUDIES



SEA TURTLE © SHEM ROOSE

## Sea turtle

More than 1,400 sea turtles were killed or injured in the Gulf of Mexico in 2011. Evidence showed that the turtles likely drowned in shrimp trawling gear. According to government documents, only about 20 percent of shrimp boats in the Gulf are appropriately outfitted with gear allowing sea turtles to escape trawling nets, which, in most cases, is required to legally fish these waters. To give turtles—including the Kemp's ridley, which was rescued from extinction in the early 1980s—a fighting chance for survival, Defenders is suing the National Marine Fisheries Service for failing to ensure that the shrimp fishery operates in compliance with the Endangered Species Act in a way that will not unduly harm sea turtles.





MANATEE © BRIAN J. SKERRY/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK

### Manatee

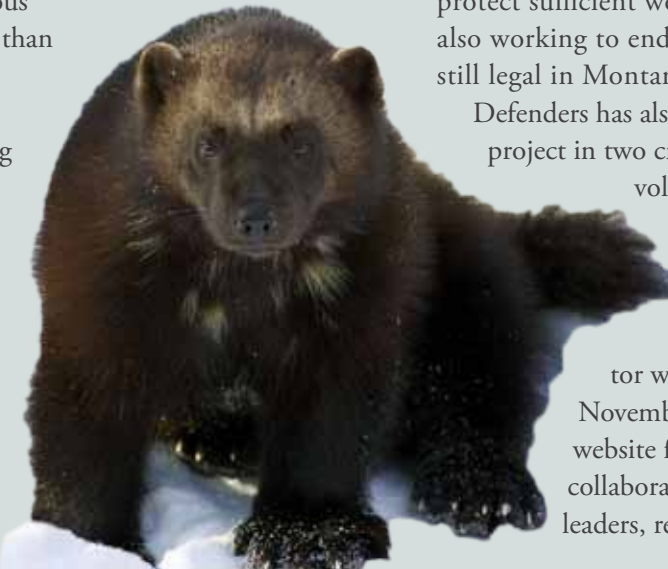
Gentle giants of shallow waters, Florida manatees have been struggling for decades to adapt to human activity around the warm coastal habitats where they live. Manatees were officially designated endangered in 1967, but they continue to face unsustainable levels of mortality from boat strikes and other threats. The last three years have been particularly deadly for manatees. In 2011 alone, watercrafts killed 88 manatees and 112 died from exposure to cold weather. With such a small total population of around 5,000 individuals, scientists believe that unless watercraft-related deaths are curtailed and warm-water habitat secured, the manatee will not recover.

In an effort to increase available safe habitat, Defenders testified in support of an FWS plan to expand protected warm-water areas in Kings Bay in Crystal River, Florida. We also opposed legislation that would have prevented funding for protection of important habitat for manatees.

### Wolverine

Wolverines are by nature creatures of the cold—a perilous distinction in an era of climate change. There are fewer than 300 wolverines in the lower 48 states and only about 32 of them appear to be successfully breeding. As global temperatures rise, their snowy mountain habitat is being lost, and their available range is shrinking.

Thanks to a lawsuit filed by Defenders and our partners, FWS reversed an earlier decision and announced that ESA protections are, in fact, warranted for wolverines. FWS is expected to make a final determination of the wolverine's status in late 2012, and with climate change happening, it is not a moment too soon. Wolverine habitat is also increasingly disturbed by snowmobiles and other human activities, and Defenders is working to



WOLVERINE © ISTOCKPHOTO

protect sufficient wolverine denning habitat. We are also working to end trapping of wolverines, which is still legal in Montana.

Defenders has also launched a “citizen science” project in two critical wildlife corridors where volunteers monitor several transects to document tracks and other signs of wolverines. We have also deployed remote-controlled cameras in Montana to monitor wolverine movements. And in November 2010, we helped launch the website for the Wolverine Network, a collaboration of wolverine conservation leaders, researchers and advocates.

David Gaillard  
1967-2011



Defenders of Wildlife mourns the passing of dedicated naturalist and conservation advocate David Gaillard. Dave, a member of our Northern Rockies Staff, was buried in an avalanche in December while skiing in the Shoshone National Forest in Wyoming. Dave's passing is a great loss for the conservation community, particularly for the species he championed the most—lynx, wolverines and fishers—among other areas of focus such as wildlife adaptation to climate change, state wildlife action plans and habitat conservation plans. Dave's loss commits Defenders all the more to carrying out the work he cared so much about.

**Some species such as the walrus and the wolverine desperately need ESA protections, but they are put on a waiting list because FWS lacks the resources to protect them. Defenders is fighting for their inclusion.**

### Pacific walrus

In 2010, a video camera captured the image of tens of thousands of walruses departing the waters of the Chukchi Sea. It was an ominous exodus documented only twice before, in 2007 and 2009. Like so many animals in the Arctic, walrus are facing radical and rapid changes to the environment due to climate change. They have watched the ice retreat farther out to sea and are now faced with the choice of following the

ice to deeper waters where it will be harder to find food, or hauling out onto less desirable land where female walruses and their young face increasing dangers from predators, overcrowding and stampedes. In 2009, FWS reported the trampling deaths of 131 walruses in Alaska, numbers that are likely to rise as sea ice retreats.

Climate change poses a grave threat to the Pacific walrus, but like so many other imperiled species that are not yet listed

under the ESA, the walrus must wait in line for protection while FWS slogs through a large backlog of candidate species. In the meantime, Defenders is working to establish a sound scientific platform for walrus protection. For example, this year we funded remote sensing cameras at walrus haul-outs in Bristol Bay, which will record critical data about how climate change is affecting walrus behavior and how best to aid this imperiled species.



**Climate-change-related walrus stampedes continue to make news.**

## RECENT SUCCESSES

**SHARKS** The world's oceans have been home to sharks for 400 million years, and this ocean predator plays a critical role in the marine environment. Research has shown that shark population declines have critical implications for ocean health. But shark populations are declining worldwide because of unsustainable fishing practices, including the cruel practice of shark finning. Each year, up to 73 million sharks are killed to feed the global demand for shark-fin soup.

In the United States, California has been a major market for shark fins. Defenders' California field team collaborated with a broad and diverse coalition to pass a bill that banned possession, sale and distribution of shark fins in the state. The new law will ease commercial pressure on sharks and help prevent further decline of these important ocean residents off the coast of California.

**SEA OTTERS** Defenders scored another important win for sea otters by saving the California Sea Otter Fund, which collects donations from state taxpayers who support sea otter conservation. Over the past five years, the fund has raised more than \$1.4 million in contributions. And it's one of the few lifelines supporting scientific research to better understand how toxic chemicals and pollution are harming sea otters. Marine biologists don't know what is dragging otter numbers down, but they remain hopeful that the clues revealed by the study will help buoy sea otters back to safety.

**POLAR BEARS** In 2011, a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the Interior Department failed to adequately review the environmental impacts of exempting greenhouse-gas-emitting industries located outside the polar bear's range from federal regulation. Defenders challenged the 2008 Bush-era rule, and the court is now requiring a full environmental analysis of the polar bear—the first species added to the endangered species list primarily because of threats from climate change—to prevent its extinction. In another ruling, based on the bear's threatened status, a federal court upheld FWS's decision to prohibit the importation of sport-hunted polar bear “trophies” from Canada.

**MEXICAN PARROTS** Defenders has been working for years on a campaign to end the unsustainable Mexican parrot trade. We helped secure a ban on the capture and sale of wild parrots in 2008 and since then we have been working to publicize the ban and the plight of parrots within the country. Our efforts have led to a significant decrease in the illegal parrot trade in Mexico. In fact, at last report in 2010, only 566 Mexican parrots were seized, which was a full third lower than the year before. We expect a strong continuation of this downward trend. This year we also helped organize a traveling exhibition on the parrot trade, which has appeared in Mexico City's Chapultepec and Los Coyotes zoos.



“Defenders’ leadership was essential to the creation of the Idaho Wood River Wolf Project. The four-year demonstration project proved successful beyond our most optimistic expectations. Going into the 2012 grazing season, Defenders’ leadership remains central to sustaining and expanding the project and building regional acceptance of the value of nonlethal, predator-deterrence practices. Meeting these challenges looks possible and will be a significant achievement.”



—Commissioner  
Lawrence Schoen,  
Board of Blaine County, Idaho

## Living with Wildlife

Defenders is redefining wildlife conservation from the ground up by figuring out innovative ways for people to successfully share the landscape with wildlife, particularly large carnivores—like wolves, grizzly bears, Florida panthers and polar bears. Figuring out how to live with wildlife is the only way to achieve full and long-term species recovery, and it is a top priority for Defenders.

To date, we have “coexistence” projects in Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming. As the word coexistence implies, our projects rest on the conviction that, with cooperative planning and practical problem-solving on the ground, people and wildlife can live alongside each other and even thrive on the same landscape.

Defenders believes wildlife conservation is a collaborative endeavor. We work with ranchers, researchers, community and conservation groups and federal, state and tribal agency biologists to develop, field test, promote, implement and share the costs of these nonlethal wildlife deterrents, such as fencing, guard dogs and range riders. Our goals are to reduce wildlife and livestock losses, build better relationships among all stakeholders and keep the discussion solution-focused to demonstrate that living in the midst of large carnivores is not only possible but cost-effective and beneficial.

Livestock guard dogs and range riders help make living near carnivores possible.



© ERIN MACCALLUM/DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE



© CINDY HILLEMEYER/DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE



© LARRY THORNGREN

## Wolf

IN THE WAKE of Congress’ delisting of gray wolves in the Northern Rockies, our programs to reduce conflicts and foster public acceptance of wolves have taken on heightened urgency. In the past year, Defenders helped the Oregon legislature pass a bill designating \$100,000 for livestock-compensation and wolf-coexistence programs. But to be eligible for compensation for livestock lost to wolves, ranchers must practice nonlethal predator deterrents. We also established a range-rider program in north-eastern Oregon, where riders on horseback help protect livestock by hazing wolves on private ranchlands and in national forests.

And in Washington state, we are assisting wildlife agencies with trainings on nonlethal deterrents and depredation investigations. We are also working with tribes, universities and local media to build support for the wolf’s return.

In Montana near Yellowstone and Glacier national parks, we continued our support for three range-rider programs, as well as fencing and other conflict-reduction strategies. Our ranching partners reported minimal wolf-related livestock losses—an especially notable accomplishment in areas where livestock predation had been chronically high in the past. And in the Southwest, we completed 12 coexistence projects to reduce conflicts with the endangered Mexican wolf.

## Wood River: A Model of Coexistence

Defenders’ flagship Wood River Wolf Project completed its fourth successful season in central Idaho, where four wolf packs currently range in Sawtooth National Forest. The project began after the Phantom Hill pack settled in the area and were targeted for extermination after preying on sheep. Defenders stepped in, met with sheep ranchers, state and federal agency representatives and county commissioners and convinced them to try nonlethal deterrents. The pack got a second chance and Defenders’ first true large-scale field test of our coexistence strategies was a great success.

This year, our field crew helped to protect 10,000 sheep during summer grazing months, just when wolf pups are big enough to start roaming and packs are beginning to expand their territories well beyond the den. In four years, fewer than 20 sheep have been lost to wolves. As a result, no wolves have been killed and the project became a model to try in other areas.

This year, our expanded efforts in the Wood River region gained the official support of county commissioners and a diverse group of partners including ranchers, local donors and state and federal wildlife agencies.



## Black-footed ferret

THE ENDANGERED black-footed ferret is an essential grasslands species. But for ferrets to recover, prairie dogs—the ferrets' main prey species—must survive.

Though not listed as endangered under the ESA, prairie dogs have declined by more than 95 percent across the Great Plains. These small grazers have long been viewed as competitors with cattle and treated as vermin. In fact, they are still subject to poisoning and often unlimited shooting, even on most public lands. At Defenders,

we are working toward saving prairie dogs while recognizing that broad acceptance of the species will take time.

Defenders pays landowners who are supportive of prairie dogs and black-footed ferrets not to graze cattle in a narrow buffer zone along the borders of their properties. This allows tall grass to grow, discouraging prairie dogs from entering neighboring private properties where they might be poisoned. In building tolerance for prairie dogs and fostering coexistence, Defenders is paving the way for recovery of the prairie-dog dependent black-footed ferret.



© SANDY SISI

## From Compensation to Coexistence

For 23 years, Defenders' predator compensation fund paid ranchers full-market value for verified livestock lost to wolves and grizzlies—a total of \$1.4 million. The fund laid the foundation for building rancher tolerance for wolves following their reintroduction in the West after being absent for most of the 20th century. Now that recent federal legislation has been passed to provide this type of funding, Defenders is focusing on proven methods that deter livestock losses all together. Having firmly established our reputation as the go-to group for large-carnivore conflicts, Defenders is the conservation community's leading voice on living with predators.

Defenders works to develop successful strategies that allow humans and carnivores, from black-footed ferrets (left) to grizzly bears (above), to coexist on the landscape.

## Grizzly bear

ONLY ABOUT 1,600 grizzly bears remain in the lower 48 states. These bears are opportunistic feeders—a tendency that can make human and bear coexistence challenging. To survive in the wild, bears feed on everything from berries to carrion. A major cause of death for grizzly bears is from conflicts associated with habituation to attractants like garbage, chicken coops, fruit trees, livestock and bee hives.

Defenders reduces conflicts between grizzlies and people by reimbursing ranchers for livestock losses and securing attractants like garbage. These projects include offering

landowners financial assistance to install electric fencing around beehives, chickens, sheep and other livestock. We helped fund the installation of fencing around community dumps and provided bear-resistant trash containers and food lockers at public campgrounds. We also helped in the hiring of a range rider for a ranch with chronic bear conflicts. In the past year, we completed 27 proactive projects in northwestern Montana and northern Idaho, in and around the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery areas. We also hope to keep migration corridors to the Bitterroot safe for grizzlies to improve the odds for bears reoccupying this recovery area.

GRIZZLY RECOVERY MAP



© PAUL WICKEN/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK

## Polar bear

WITH THEIR hunting grounds literally melting out from under them, polar bears are forced to roam on land in search of alternative sources of food, resulting in increased frequency of bear-human conflicts. Coexistence strategies are critical to the polar bear's future, which at the moment looks bleak given that the polar bear's arctic range is likely to continue to shrink as sea ice forms later in the fall and melts earlier in the spring.

Defenders is working with Alaskan Native communities on the North Slope of Alaska to develop tools for living near polar bears. This year, we supported a pilot project to install bear-resistant food storage lockers in these communities, which serves the dual purpose of replacing historically used ice cellars that are failing due to loss of permafrost, and deterring polar bears from scavenging from human food sources.

Defenders also worked with scientists, policy makers, Alaska Native leaders and conservation organizations to prepare a report on feeding methods that keep bears away from people, which will be used to help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and communities on the North Slope reduce the chances of conflicts between people and polar bears.

© JOEL SARTORE/WWW.JOELSARTORE.COM





BISON © SANDY SSETI



“Bison are a keystone species, but today wild herds are far too small and their range is far too limited to play any real ecological role. They are, in fact, ‘ecologically extinct.’ But by working with tribes, Montana officials and landowners around Yellowstone, Defenders is helping wild bison rebound for their sake and for the health of grassland ecosystems.”

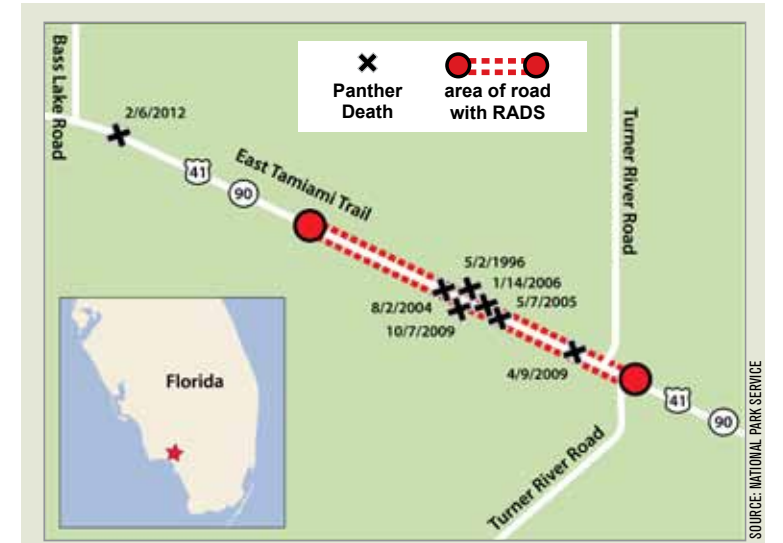
– Jonathan Proctor, Defenders’ Rocky Mountain region representative, who works to protect and restore grizzly bears in the U.S. Northern Rockies and Cascades, and bison, swift fox, black-footed ferrets and black-tailed prairie dogs in the Great Plains.



## Bison

THEY’RE not carnivores, but bison are essential to the health of grassland ecosystems. That’s why Defenders has been working to expand the number and size of the continent’s wild bison herds, including the nation’s largest in Yellowstone National Park. In 2011, the state of Montana began allowing Yellowstone bison to roam Gardiner Basin, a 75,000-acre area just north of Yellowstone, during the winter months. Many residents here welcome the bison, but some fear that the large grazers will damage their property or transmit disease. To avoid conflicts and maintain goodwill toward bison, we are helping residents in Gardiner Basin build bison-resistant fences.

We have also worked tirelessly to help relocate some of these genetically important bison to new areas, including the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Indian reservations in Montana. With financial support from Defenders, Fort Peck and Fort Belknap are expanding their bison reserves and building wildlife-friendly fencing—which keeps bison in while allowing elk and deer to jump over and pronghorn to go under. This work has the dual benefit of helping to restore wild bison herds beyond Yellowstone and helping the tribes reclaim part of their cultural heritage.



This map shows the recently installed roadside animal detection system (RADS) along 1.3 miles of a particularly deadly road for panthers in Florida. Defenders partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to find funding for the installation.

## Florida panther

WITH ONLY 100 to 160 adult Florida panthers in the wild, their survival is dependent on the ability of Florida residents to coexist with them. Much of the panther’s range in Florida is on private lands, so expanding available habitat will require working hand-in-hand with private landowners. This year, we have assisted property owners with funding for building predator-resistant enclosures to protect pets and livestock at night. We also recruited and trained volunteers to work with residents on conflict prevention and conducted training workshops on coexisting with panthers. Finally, Defenders is helping to develop coexistence tools and a conservation-incentive program to compensate ranchers for the ecosystem services provided by their lands.



FLORIDA PANTHER © RUTH COLE/TRUST/ANIMALS



## Addressing Climate Change with Wildlife-Friendly Renewable Energy

Defenders of Wildlife is pioneering the science and strategies behind helping wildlife adapt to a changing climate, and we are advocating for smart renewable energy policies that will protect wildlife and wild places.

An endangered San Joaquin kit fox on the Carrizo Plain in California, a hotspot for solar-energy development.



© KEVIN SCHAEFER/NATUREPL.COM

### 'Smart from the Start' Renewables

Defenders supports the development of solar and wind energy, but not at the expense of wildlife. That's why Defenders is working to ensure that the national transition to renewable energy is "smart from the start"—using both public and private land and favoring development on disturbed lands over more valuable wildlife habitat. It simply doesn't make sense to degrade healthy land and destabilize imperiled wildlife in our attempt to create a healthier global climate. And it isn't necessary.

Over the past year we have analyzed potential wildlife impacts from many large-scale solar and wind energy project applications. Some of the proposals for development on our public lands would have adversely impacted endangered and declining species, including the San Joaquin kit fox, desert

tortoise, California condor and golden eagle. Working with stakeholders, Defenders helped reduce impacts from many of these projects by decreasing project size, increasing the acreage of land permanently protected as mitigation for project impacts, and encouraging the relocation of proposed projects to abandoned or disturbed farmlands.

To make the process of renewable energy development more efficient, Defenders and our partners are advocating an approach that would require wildlife and environmental protections as up-front guiding principles for project siting and design. We urged the Obama administration to adopt smart-from-the-start principles for planning, designing and managing renewable energy projects. And, we continue to work closely with the administration, Interior Department officials and leaders in the renewable energy industry to frame policies for solar and wind development that will

avoid, minimize and mitigate the impacts to sensitive wildlife and habitat.

Defenders also engaged in a public education campaign, highlighting through the press and social media outlets the impacts of large-scale renewable energy development on wildlife and habitat. Defenders led a coalition effort to mobilize activists to turn out for public hearings on the administration's plan for a solar-energy program in the West. We placed guest editorials in the *San Diego Union Tribune* and *The Sacramento Bee* and secured favorable editorials in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *The Desert Sun*. And we launched a radio tour in six western states, securing more than 20 interviews with coalition spokespeople. As a result of our efforts, the Interior Department issued a supplement to the plan, which included significant improvements for conservation.

### Helping Wildlife Adapt to Climate Change

Climate change is proceeding at a rate that makes impacts to wildlife and habitats unavoidable. Even with the most rigorous emissions reductions we need to plan climate adaptation measures to help wildlife in the face of impacts such as shifting habitat ranges, rises in sea levels along coastal areas, and changes in precipitation as the climate continues to change.

That's why Defenders has made the policy and science of wildlife adaptation a top priority. We are working closely with states, private landowners and land trusts, federal agencies and Congress to generate and hone smart strategies for helping wildlife adversely affected by climate change.

Among other initiatives, we are championing the SAFE Act, legislation sponsored by Sens. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) that would mandate a coordinated national adaptation strategy, the inclusion of climate considerations into state wildlife adaptation plans, the development of state wildlife adaptation plans and enhancement of the U.S. Geological Survey's National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center. We also hosted a congressional briefing to

further highlight the need for a legislative strategy for wildlife adaptation and successfully fended off a series of legislative attacks on climate change adaptation work by the federal government.

This year, our climate change experts conducted two assessments of species vulnerability to climate change. We analyzed the vulnerability of all 38 mammal species found in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to impacts from climate change. Our assessment found that almost half the species there are at serious risk due to climate change, making the protection of the refuge from oil and gas development and other disturbances that much more important for polar bears, arctic foxes and musk oxen. On the other side of the country, we worked with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and species experts to understand the vulnerability to climate change of a sample of Florida's unique wildlife. We also worked with the state to develop a process for incorporating climate change information into their state wildlife action plan. In other regions, we hosted a series of workshops in North Carolina and Oregon on developing and incorporating adaptation strategies into the state wildlife action plans. Defenders is planning a similar workshop series in California.

### NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND WILDLIFE SCIENCE CENTER

To help broaden our understanding of the impacts of climate change on natural resources, and to develop response strategies for wildlife and wild lands, Defenders advocated for the creation of the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center at the U.S. Geological Survey in 2008. We continue to push aggressively for funding for the center—efforts that helped boost federal support from \$21 million to \$25 million in 2011.



© JOSÉ LUIS GUTIÉRREZ/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM





GLACIER NATIONAL PARK © MEGAN LORENZ

From national forests to refuges, Defenders works to ensure our public lands are managed for the conservation of habitat and wildlife.

## CONSERVING AND RESTORING NATIVE HABITAT

# Safeguarding Public and Private Lands for Wildlife

Central to our mission is conserving and restoring the healthy network of habitats that are essential to wildlife survival. We work with federal agencies, Congress and private landowners to maintain healthy lands for future generations.

GOthic MOUNTAIN © ROBBIe GEORGEZ/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK



### Public lands

Our national wildlife refuges, national forests and other public lands form the cornerstone of federal wildlife conservation and restoration, and Defenders has been a longtime advocate for smart management of these lands.

#### National Forest Management

Defenders has fought for years to ensure that healthy wildlife populations are integral to national forest management practices. We blocked the George W. Bush administration's attempts to weaken wildlife protections under the National Forest Management Act and since then, we have been relentless in our efforts to ensure that new national forest regulations contain proactive provisions for wildlife conservation and adequate accountability. In support of this effort, we produced *Obama's Forest Rule*, a report detailing our expectations for strong, binding wildlife protection in a final forest-planning rule.

When the public comment period opened

for the proposed forest management regulations, we launched an intensive campaign, generating nearly 100,000 citizen comments and mobilizing activist and staff participation in 10 regional hearings. Defenders was quoted in almost every top newspaper and in an Associated Press story picked up by hundreds of smaller outlets. We worked with the states and members of Congress on letters to the Obama administration, advocating for a strong forest-management rule. And we developed a new web page ([defenders.org/ourforests](http://defenders.org/ourforests)) devoted to providing information to stakeholders, media and the public about national forest management.

To provide stronger statutory protections and clear congressional direction for wildlife conservation on lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Defenders is again championing the America's Wildlife Heritage Act, legislation sponsored by Rep. Ron Kind (D-Wisc.). And last year, when a federal appeals court upheld the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, we won a major victory in the courts to protect

our wild national forests and grasslands from new road building, logging and development.

#### National Wildlife Refuge Vision

For more than a century, the National Wildlife Refuge System has played a critical role in the preservation of this nation's wildlife heritage. With climate change and a host of societal changes redrawing the ecological map, it is incumbent on FWS to ensure that management of refuges keeps pace with the times. Because of this, FWS crafted a new strategic "refuge vision" to better utilize lands set aside to conserve the nation's fish, wildlife and plants.

As a longtime supporter and advocate for the refuge system, Defenders was heavily engaged in helping FWS develop this new vision. Our experts worked over the past year to analyze the refuge system and provide constructive, long-range feedback on the initial plan. Defenders also worked to expand participation in the public process and helped FWS facilitate a national conference on the refuge system in Wisconsin.

### Private lands

Private land conservation provides critical habitat for wild species and Defenders is actively helping landowners enhance their conservation efforts.

#### Living Lands

Defenders' Living Lands program strives to increase the effectiveness of the many private land trusts working across the country to conserve habitat. Over the past year, we held workshops and webinars for more than 100 land trusts to help them define a vision for adaptation in the face of climate change. The goal of these workshops is to demonstrate an inexpensive way to address climate change impacts. We worked with participants to define the species and habitats they wish to protect, identify the threats that may be on the horizon and determine tools for addressing those threats.

We also produced a series of digital newsletters focused on climate change adaptation. And we have been working to help private landowners in the Chesapeake Bay region identify and prioritize land conservation opportunities.

#### Conservation Incentives

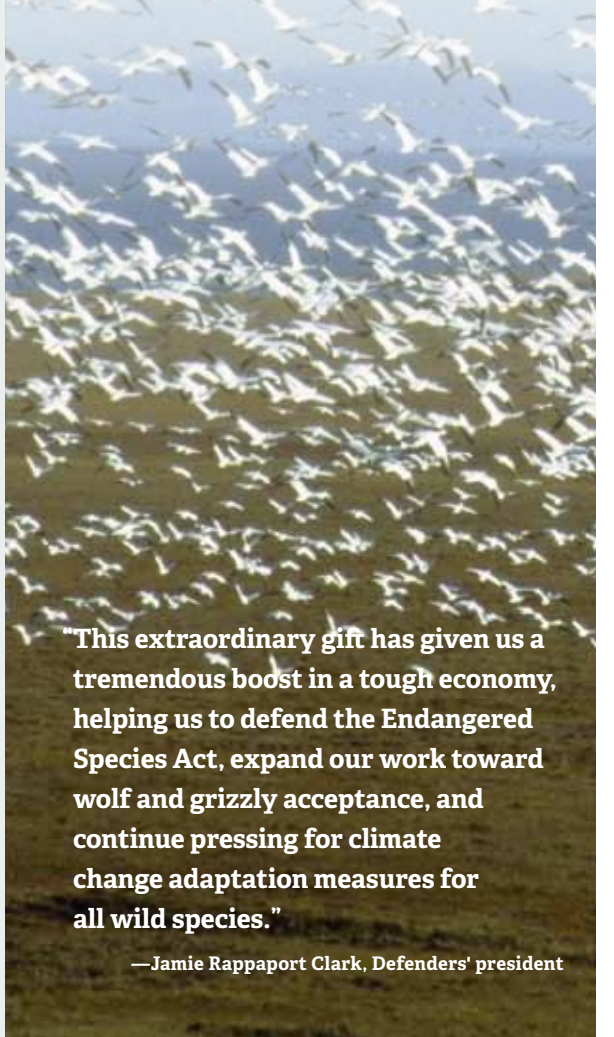
To make private land conservation more attractive and affordable, Defenders works to create incentives for landowners interested in habitat conservation. This year we helped pass a ballot measure in Oregon that will provide 15 percent of the state lottery funds—about \$100 million annually—for wildlife and habitat conservation, including on private lands. Also in Oregon we worked to further legislation that will provide payments for ecosystem services to landowners who maintain and restore private lands for wildlife and habitat conservation.

#### Conservation Registry

Defenders' unique conservation registry is an online database that records, tracks and maps wildlife habitat conservation projects across the country. Visitors to [www.conservationregistry.org](http://www.conservationregistry.org) can look up projects in their area, seek out volunteer opportunities and even post their own projects. Over the past year we expanded the conservation registry to include the states of Arkansas, California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. More than 96,000 projects are now part of the registry, making it the most comprehensive online tool for tracking and mapping wildlife habitat conservation actions across the nation.

## An extraordinary gift

This year, Defenders received \$2 million from James Chambers to advance our biodiversity conservation work. It is the largest gift from an individual in the organization's history, and a donation that will help us further our work on behalf of wolves, bears, bison and the many other species and habitats we help protect.



**"This extraordinary gift has given us a tremendous boost in a tough economy, helping us to defend the Endangered Species Act, expand our work toward wolf and grizzly acceptance, and continue pressing for climate change adaptation measures for all wild species."**

—Jamie Rappaport Clark, Defenders' president

ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE © JAMES P. BLAIR/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STOCK





5TH ANNUAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AWARDS DINNER

# A Tribute to Rodger Schlickeisen

Rodger Schlickeisen, who retired from Defenders this fall after 20 years as president and CEO, was the sole honoree at our annual awards dinner on September 22 in Washington, D.C. Board member Jeff Corwin served as master of ceremonies at the event, which was attended by more than 400 people. Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), League of Conservation Voters President Gene Karpinski and Defenders board members Ed Asner and Winsome McIntosh delivered tributes. Grammy-nominated singer Neko Case performed a song in Rodger's honor. The dinner raised more than \$600,000 to help us advance critical work for wildlife. Thanks to all who donated so generously and to all who joined us for this special evening.

↑ Rodger Schlickeisen accepts the Legacy Award, recalling the highlights of his 20 years with Defenders.

↓ Board member Ed Asner and Vice Chair Winsome McIntosh deliver a joint commentary on Rodger's legacy to Defenders and to conservation.



↑ President and CEO Jamie Rappaport Clark, President Emeritus Rodger Schlickeisen and board member Jeff Corwin celebrate Rodger's legacy at the awards dinner.



→ Neko Case sings her tribute to Rodger.

← Development Committee Chair Laura Seydel recognizes and thanks Defenders' supporters at the dinner.

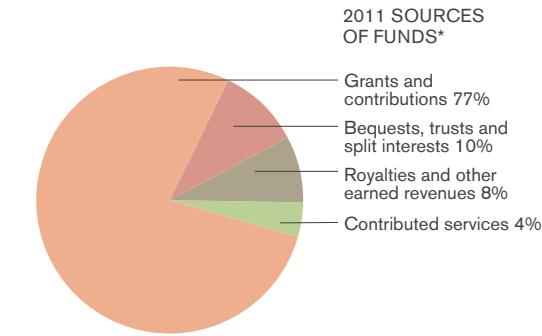
## FINANCIAL REPORT

For the year ending September 30, 2011

In 2011, Defenders of Wildlife's 1 million members and supporters contributed more than \$31 million for wildlife and wildlife habitat. Law firms and others generously donated their time and expertise. Whether in the field, the courts or on Capitol Hill, it is the steadfast support of our donors that allows Defenders to sustain our program and public education efforts.

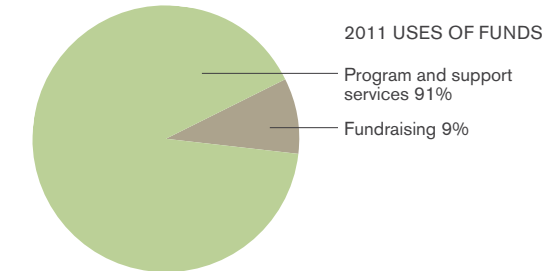
### SOURCES OF FUNDS

Grants and contributions	\$24,568
Bequests, trust and split interests	\$3,285
Income from investments	(\$1)
Royalties and other earned revenues	\$2,571
Contributed services	\$1,279
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$31,702</b>



### USES OF FUNDS

Wildlife action	\$9,155
Law and legislation	\$3,347
Media and education	\$9,619
Constituency outreach	\$1,110
Fundraising	\$2,833
Management and general	\$5,474
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$31,538</b>



\* For the pie-chart illustration, we have excluded the negative loss in investments in the development of the percentages.

Change in net assets	\$164
Net assets, start of year	\$23,675
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$23,839</b>

Dollars are in thousands.



KOPCHO FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT THE YELLOWSTONE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION WORKSHOP

## Richard Kopcho

*Making the most of every dollar*

Defenders' board member Richard Kopcho developed a love of the wild on early morning fishing trips with his father, hiking with the Boy Scouts and skiing and backpacking in the Sierra Nevada. Early in his life, the wild called, one howling icon of the wild in particular—the wolf.

"Sometime in my early 20s, I saw a magazine article with a logo of Defenders of Wildlife and its image of the wolf," Richard recalls. "It spoke to me, and I sent in my \$10 or \$15, and I kept sending in my \$10 to \$15."

Years later, Richard and his wife, Darcy, decided one Christmas to donate to Defenders' adopt-a-wolf program. "We had a real tie to the family structure of wolves, the way they stay together. We decided our family totem was the wolf," he says.

In 2005 the Kopcho family—Richard, Darcy, Blake and Jessie—attended Defenders' Wildlife Conservation Workshop in Yellowstone, where they experienced an ecosystem made whole by the return of the wolf. Richard was soon invited to join Defenders' board of directors, where he has served for six years, including several as treasurer.

"Richard has been invaluable to Defenders as we navigate these challenging economic times," says Defenders' President Jamie Rappaport Clark. "His financial expertise has helped us maximize our efficiency and effectiveness, so that more resources are available for the core work of wildlife conservation." Richard and Darcy also donate generously through the Kopcho Family Foundation and encourage others to support Defenders' work, including Blake and Jessie, who are both members.

"What I value about Defenders is its willingness to take on those special interests that scheme to use public land and resources for personal benefit and its commitment to serving as a guardian of the public trust and of nature's trust," says Richard.



# ways to give

## President's Council

Donors of \$1,000 or more are recognized as members of the President's Council. This special leadership group provides important support to Defenders' programs and offers opportunities for more personal involvement in the work of the organization. Visit the President's Council website at: [www.defenders.org/presidentscouncil](http://www.defenders.org/presidentscouncil).

## Wildlife Circle

Members who support Defenders of Wildlife with a donation of \$100 to \$999 are included in our Wildlife Circle. These crucial donors are key partners in our work to protect wolves and other wildlife. In appreciation of their dedicated support, Wildlife Circle members are recognized as a part of our inner circle.

## Wildlife Guardians

When you join Defenders' Wildlife Guardians, our monthly giving program, your donations can be made easily and automatically through a credit card or checking account. For more information, visit: [www.defenders.org/wildlifeguardians](http://www.defenders.org/wildlifeguardians).

## Bequests and Life Income Gifts

By including Defenders as a beneficiary in your will, living trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy or other estate plan today, you can provide a legacy gift to support our mission well into the future. You can specify that Defenders receive a certain percentage, dollar amount or asset in your estate. Or you can leave specific bequests to family members and friends, and specify that Defenders receive a percentage of the remaining estate value.

To include Defenders in your will or other estate plans, please provide the following language to your professional advisor:

"I bequeath \_\_\_\_\_ (describe dollar amount, asset to be given or percentage of your residuary estate) to Defenders of Wildlife (Tax ID# 53-0183181), a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the District of Columbia with its principal office at 1130 17th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036."

We can also help you structure life-income gifts such as charitable gift annuities or charitable trusts that support wildlife while providing income and tax advantages for you and your loved ones. If you would like more information, please call us toll free at 1.800.915.6789, e-mail [legacy@defenders.org](mailto:legacy@defenders.org), write to us at Office of Gift Planning, Defenders of Wildlife, 1130 17th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, or visit: [www.defenders.planyourlegacy.org](http://www.defenders.planyourlegacy.org).

## Corporate Matching Gifts

Many employers match charitable contributions made by their employees. Companies may match donations made by current employees, employees' spouses and even retirees. Check with your personnel office about your company's program or visit us at: [www.defenders.org/matching](http://www.defenders.org/matching).

## Workplace Giving/Earth Share

Earth Share is a nationwide network of America's leading nonprofit environmental and conservation organizations that raises funds through voluntary payroll deductions at federal, state, city, corporate and private workplaces across the country. Ask about Earth Share where you work and designate Defenders of Wildlife for all or part of your gift. (CFC #10624)



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*President and Chief Executive Officer*  
Donald Barry,  
*Executive Vice President*  
Fatima Collins  
Inga Sedlovsky

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Astrid Caldas  
Aimee Delach  
Natalie Dubois

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*Vice President and General Counsel*  
Gregory Buppert  
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Suzanne Stone  
Daniel Thornhill

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Juan Carlos Cantu  
Guzman

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Julie Falkner  
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Alexandra Adams  
Caitlin Balch-Burnett  
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Scotty Johnson  
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*Senior Vice President*  
Anne Porter

### Online Marketing and Communications

Mikaela King,  
*Vice President*  
Jessica Sandhu  
Ryan Cree  
Christopher Johns  
Elizabeth Kricfalusi  
Robert Manix  
Heidi Ridgley  
Chris Stergalas

### Operations

Zhabiz Chu,  
*Vice President*  
Aaron Beeson  
Jessica Gibson  
Daniel Piotrowski  
Wright Smith  
Elizabeth Williams

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Jessie Brinkley,  
*Vice President*  
Lauren Blakeslee  
Michelle Davis  
Ann Felber  
Lisa French  
Marianne Harding  
Jim Luerssen  
Shawn Neil  
Lidia Perez  
Kaitlyn Prout  
Janet Rupp  
Jessica Schor  
Chianti Seitz  
Cherie Wasoff

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*Senior Vice President & CFO*

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Nick Axelrod-McLeod  
Mark Brochman  
Shantel Brown  
Anne Gesa  
Tom Migliorini  
Jahnavi Tripathi  
Kelli Polon, Controller

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John Ladson  
Rick Barnhart  
Charles Johnson  
Mitch Shockey

### Human Resources

Meja McKenzie  
Mike Mercurio  
Alva Ball

### Information Technology

Sajjad Ahrabi,  
*Vice President*  
Ernest Carvalho  
Jimmy Chen  
James Conway

U.S. HEADQUARTERS  
1130 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
20036-4604  
Ph: 202.682.9400

ALASKA  
333 West 4th Avenue,  
Suite 302  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
Ph: 907.276.9453

ARIZONA  
110 S. Church Avenue,  
Suite 4292  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
Ph: 520.623.9653

CALIFORNIA  
1303 J Street, Suite 270  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Ph: 916.313.5800

COLORADO  
1550 Larimer Street,  
Suite 278  
Denver, CO 80202  
Ph: 303.825.0918

FLORIDA  
233 Third Street North,  
Suite 201  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
Ph: 727.823.3888

IDAHO  
P.O. Box 773  
Boise, ID 83701  
Ph: 208.424.9385

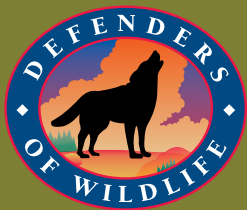
MONTANA  
303 W. Mendenhall Street,  
Suite 3  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
Ph: 406.586.3970

OREGON  
1880 Willamette Falls  
Drive, Suite 200  
West Linn, OR 97068  
Ph: 503.697.3222

WYOMING  
P. O. Box 8105  
Jackson, WY83002  
Ph: 307.690.3854

DEFENDERS' MEXICO REPRESENTATIVE  
Bosques de Cerezos 112  
Colonia Bosques de las Lomas  
Codigo Postal 11700  
Mexico D.F.  
Ph: 52.55.55.96.21.08





DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE  
1130 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036-4604  
202.682.9400  
[www.defenders.org](http://www.defenders.org)