

The Home Range

The quarterly newsletter of
Predator Conservation Alliance



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- ▼ Cougar Colds and Grizzly People
- ▼ A Conversation with David Quammen
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FALL 2003

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ON THE FRONT COVER

A grizzly bear makes his way across the Lamar Valley on a fall Yellowstone Park day. Courtesy Diane Hargreaves (406) 994-9146, hargreavesphoto.com.



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Predator Conservation Alliance works to help people and predators coexist in the Northern Rockies and Northern Plains. Since 1991, we have worked to save a place for America's predators.

Forest Predator Ecosystem Protection Program

To ensure that predators—specifically the black bear, fisher, grizzly bear, lynx, marten, mountain lion, northern goshawk, wolf and wolverine—remain an integral part of the Northern Rockies, and are distributed in self-sustaining numbers across the region.

Grassland Predator Ecosystem Protection Program

To expand and protect a system of secure habitats capable of sustaining grassland predators in the Northern Plains, including imperiled grassland predators—the black-footed ferret, burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk and swift fox.

Coexisting with Predators

To ensure that people living, working, and recreating in predator habitats of the Northern Rockies and Northern Plains do so harmoniously with predators by reducing human/predator conflicts and resolving conflicts without lethal measures.

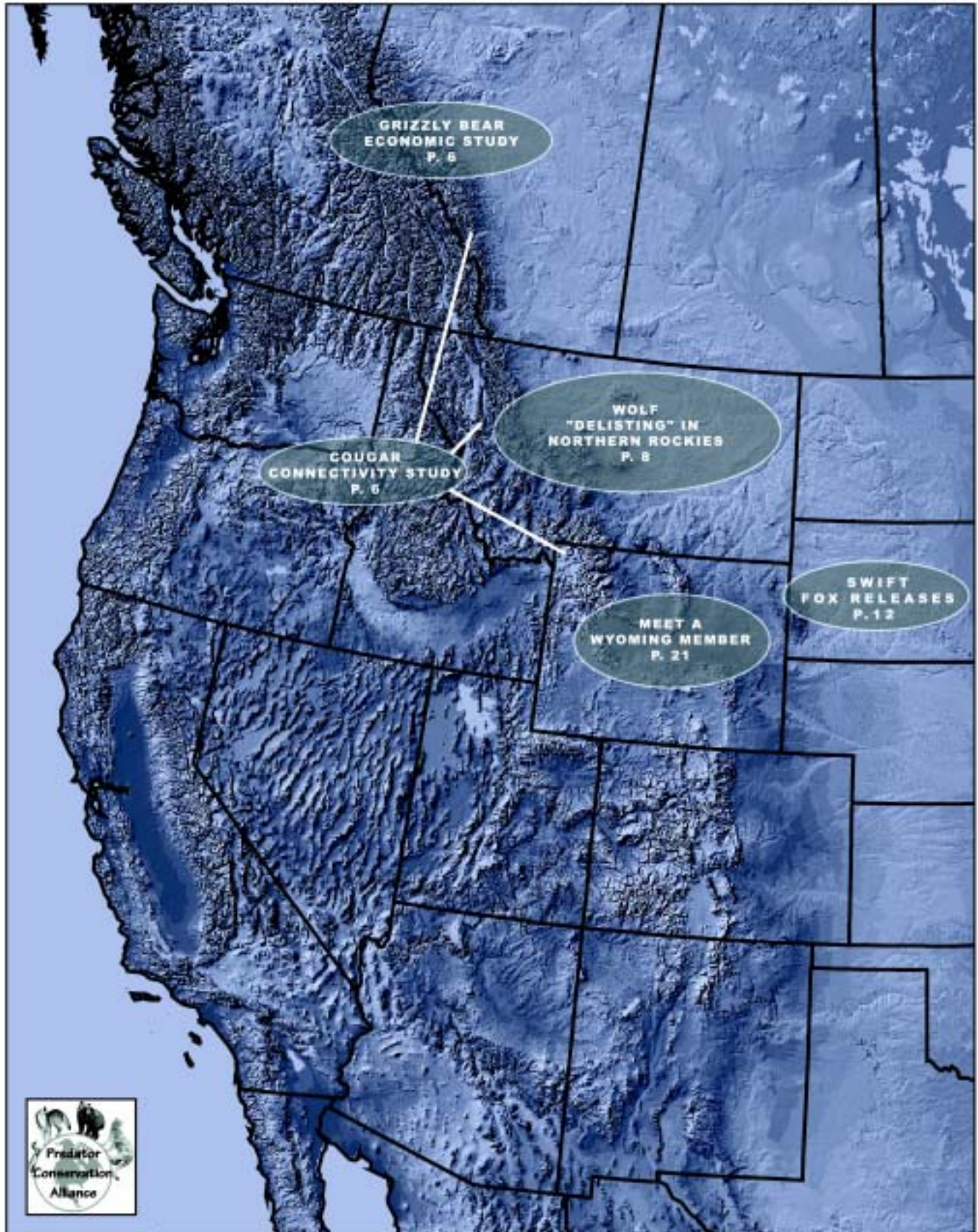
Voices for Predators

To increase public understanding and support for predators, and PCA's conservation programs, thereby advancing adoption of policies and practices that protect and restore native predators in the Northern Rockies and Northern Plains.

Predator Conservation Alliance is qualified as a nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code, and all contributions are tax-deductible.



In This Issue



Why Focus on Predators?

In the past six months or so, I have had a number of people ask me why anyone should focus on predators when: (1) ultimately conservation efforts need to focus on habitat and ecosystem protection; and (2) they are a group of species that is so controversial and can cause problems for people? Our answer is simple: science, policy, and public opinion strongly support the idea that carnivore conservation is beneficial not only to predators, but also serves the greater good of wildlife and wildlands conservation. Specifically, predators:

1) provide an excellent opportunity—maybe the best—for people to determine how we can coexist with wild nature: Predators are a symbol and embodiment of wildness, and they help define a landscape as truly wild. Predators are also a symbol and embodiment of the conflicts we can experience with wild nature. A prime indication of how well we can hold onto that wildness, in real and symbolic terms, is how people address the threats we face and conflicts we have with predators.

2) play critical, or “keystone,” roles in their ecosystem: Carnivores influence ecosystems through a “top-down regulation” effect. Wherever this phenomena has been studied, research shows that animals at the top of the food chain exert influence on the population size and behavior of their prey, which, in turn, affects other levels of the food chain, and the functions and balance of an entire ecosystem.

3) are the foundation for some of the strongest conservation measures being implemented today: Wildlands-dependent predators are more sensitive to habitat alteration and human activities than

almost all other animals. In addition, the ecological needs of carnivores help inform many conservation biology principles, including the need to protect core habitat areas and maintain corridors of species connectivity between those cores. Because of this, these animals need stronger conservation measures than almost all other animals.

4) have a pragmatic value as “umbrella” species: Protecting species that require large areas, like predators, provides an “umbrella” of protection for many other species that require smaller areas—including many species conservationists do not have the time or resources to focus on.

5) are charismatic species that serve as popular symbols, or “flagships,” for conservation efforts: Public opinion polls, whether conducted nationally or regionally, have shown that 60-75% of Americans consider predators an important part of our natural heritage, and support restoring wolves and grizzly bears into areas of suitable habitat. As such, there is a strong constituency ready to support these animals and the habitats they need—public support that will benefit wildlife and wildlands in general.

Predator Conservation Alliance focuses on predators because they are an inherent part of our wildlife heritage. Wolves, bears and other predators deserve a voice in conservation, both for their own



Swift fox sunset in South Dakota. Photo courtesy of Jim Brandenburg.

right, and because protecting these animals is an effective strategy for the protection, conservation and restoration of our country's wildlife, wildlands and wild nature. PCA's staff and Board are pleased to be working with you to be that voice, as ambassadors, for these important animals.

For All Things Wild and Free,

Tom Skeele

P.S. For more information on why predators matter and the benefits they provide people, please consult PCA's website at www.predatorconservation.org.



Tom Skeele is Predator Conservation Alliance's Executive Director. He can be reached at tom@predatorconservation.org

Field Notes

A summary of the outreach efforts and field work conducted by Predator Conservation Alliance since our last newsletter.



PCA Contributes to National Trails Day

The clouds broke and morning sunshine snapped the chill from the air in Montana's Gallatin Mountains on June 7th, as PCA participated in National Trails Day by leading a nature trip for local children. National Trails Day is a nation-wide event to celebrate our American outdoors, organized nationally by the American Hiking Society, and coordinated locally in Bozeman by the Gallatin Valley Land Trust.

Communications director Jon Schwedler led the children and their parents up on a hill trail south of Bozeman to investigate the plants, animals, and geography of the region. Among the finds were fox and deer tracks, wild strawberries, and plenty of birds. Despite a range of ages from 2-14 years, the group stayed together for two hours of fun and lively outdoor learning.

were held at educational centers, like the Darien Nature Center, and some were held at the homes of supporters, such as Paul and Linda Schutt in Chicago. In addition to giving information on the important role of predator species, Tom was "blown away" by the enthusiastic welcome he, and our western wildlife, received from his audiences. Some of this enthusiastic welcome translated to interest from media, as a large east coast city newspaper reporter began research on a Yellowstone wolf story with a visit to PCA headquarters in Bozeman, MT.



Website for "Predators of the West," a televised forum discussing the role of lions, wolves and grizzly bears in the American West. PCA forest associate David Gaillard participated on the forum.



On the Road Again

Predator Conservation Alliance executive director Tom Skeele took the wildlife word out to the streets this past spring, stopping in San Diego, Old Lyme and Darien (CT), New York City, Philadelphia, Upperville (VA), Chicago and Denver. Some of the engagements



T.V. Worth Watching

On September 3rd PCA forest predator associate David Gaillard participated in a taped television forum on the role of predators in the American West, hosted by Idaho Public Television. David was joined by 21 other participants from a variety of backgrounds—federal and state biologists, county commissioners, ranchers, hunting guides, livestock associations, tribal leaders, and conservationists.

The program, called "Predators of the West," addressed the challenges and issues surrounding the existence of our American predator species, in particular grizzly bears, wolves, and cougars. The program aired in Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming on September 18, and will air November in Montana—check your local public television station for repeat airings. To get a taste for the program, visit the producer's website at: <http://www.focuswest.org/predators/>.



Attack of the predator peppers? Nope, just the vegetable plate voicing its support for wildlife at Paul and Linda Schutt's house.

Cougar Colds and Grizzly People

PCA Partners Use New Methods to Study Carnivores of the Old West

by David Gaillard

Clues come from unexpected places; for those who study people, a trash heap can be an informational gold mine. For those who study other species, trash heaps aren't as common, but other sources can be just as valuable—if one is creative enough to look in the right place. Two PCA research partners did just that, and came up with new ways to better understand two of our country's wildest, and most magnificent, animals.

A cougar mother outside of Jackson, Wyoming. Photo courtesy of Thomas Mangelsen.



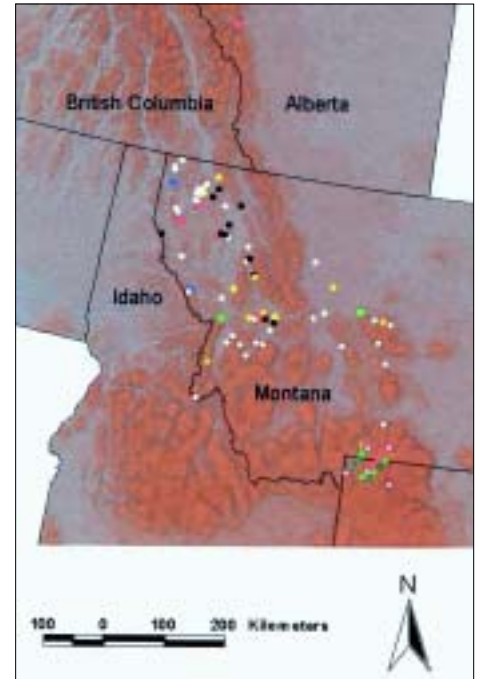
Cougar Connections

For the cougar, the virus may have been a mild annoyance. But to Mary Poss and Roman Biek of the University of Montana, the virus was a trail of genetic bread crumbs tracing interactions between cougars, indicating connectivity between cougar populations from southern Alberta to Wyoming.

Poss and Biek studied the occurrence of the non-lethal "FIV" virus in wild cougars to determine how well cougars are able to avoid the fragmenting effect of human developments on their ranges. Fragmentation is a serious risk to healthy cougar numbers, as isolated populations are more vulnerable to in-breeding and disease.

FIV was useful because the researchers were able to take advantage of the virus's accelerated mutation rate to document the frequency of contact between cougar populations. In short, the greater the disparity in virus DNA between cougars, the less likely those cougars were in contact with each other, and the more likely that fragmentation was limiting their mobility.

Fortunately, the initial results of the study were encouraging to cougar conservation, since close connections were determined for most cougars across this broad area. And the implications of this pioneering methodology for other spe-



Sample locations used by researchers to determine isolation of cougars in the Northern Rockies.

cies is also encouraging; the potential exists for similar viruses to illuminate connectivity between other rare carnivore populations—bears, wolves, lynx and wolverines.

Carnivore connectivity—something to consider the next time you catch the flu!

Restoring Endangered Grizzlies

Trash heaps may be interesting to archaeologists, but they are also interesting to grizzly bears. This unfortunate fact is just one of many reasons why researchers Troy Merrill of Idaho and David Mattson of the U.S. Geological Survey in Arizona thought it important to include human factors in their grizzly bear conservation research.

Forest Predator Ecosystem

Merrill and Mattson first began with an ecological study that measured the capacity of their study area to support grizzly bears, and how that capacity is altered by different projections of human growth and human tolerance toward grizzly bears. Some of their results indicated a potential for improved coexistence between people and grizzlies:

The major effect of human numbers on the extent of source habitat is significant because management attention has historically focused on road access, and has almost altogether neglected the implications of human population growth to mitigation or other management strategies... Perhaps the most hopeful result of this analysis is the indicated importance of human lethality to determining conditions for grizzly bears in the Cabinet-Yaak region... it is in reducing levels of human lethality that there is greatest promise for mitigating the effects of prospective human population increases.

For most researchers, these results would have been an adequate stopping point. But Merrill and Mattson went a step beyond their ecological research with

Tolerance for wildlife can be based upon a series of complicated relationships, as Merrill's and Mattson's grizzly bear study reveal.



People's attitudes may be the best indicator of the potential for grizzly bear survival within a given region.

mapping and analysis of the social landscape within their study area, as human tolerance will ultimately play a large role in the fate of grizzly bear recovery. While measuring and recording human systems gets complicated very quickly (as seen in the "bird's nest" graphic), the gained insights and projections can often prove more important than just purely ecological information.

Predator Conservation Alliance applauds the creative research of our partners Mary Poss, Roman Piek, Troy Merrill, and David Mattson, and look forward to more great work from them. Also deserving appreciation for financial

support of these studies are the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) and the Wilburforce Foundation for this exceptional grant-making program. For more information about these studies, contact Predator Conservation Alliance or the researchers themselves.



David Gaillard is a Program Associate with PCA. He leads our Forest Protection Program. He can be reached at gaillard@predatorconservation.org

Biological Success, Political Obstacles for Northern Rockies Wolves

by David Gaillard

Success!

The close of 2002 gave wolf supporters nationwide something to howl with joy about—the achievement of biological recovery for wolves in the U.S. Northern Rocky Mountains! The definition of a recovered wolf population of:

- 1) at least ten successfully breeding pairs of wolves in each of the three Northern Rocky Mountain populations of Yellowstone, Idaho, and northwestern Montana,
- 2) for three successive years,
- 3) with connections between the three populations—were met in 2002.

In fact, by the end of last year, there were 43 known successfully breeding pairs in the Northern Rockies—including a record 23 breeding pairs in the greater Yellowstone area. Wolves were also known to have successfully dispersed between the three Northern Rocky populations as well—an important point, because even with 30 breeding pairs in the region, isolation of populations still carries a significant extinction risk.

The news, however, is not all good for wolves. Two political decisions, one made by a state, and one by the federal government, threaten to steal defeat from the jaws of wolf success.

One Step Forward, Two Decisions Back

The state decision belongs to Wyoming. Early this year, the Wyoming



PCA forest associate David Gaillard was the first person to speak at the last Wyoming Game and Fish Commission wolf plan hearing in July. Despite his—and most speakers'—protests, the Commission adopted the proposed plan.

legislature passed a bill—later signed into law by Governor Dave Freudenthal—which classified wolves as a “predator” in all areas of Wyoming outside of national parks and adjacent federally protected Wilderness—an area that represents about 85% of the state. The net effect of this law is that there is no authority to protect wolves from being killed anytime, by anybody, by virtually any method in the majority of the state.

So far, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has held firm that Wyoming must maintain at least 15 wolf packs in the state, and that Wyoming cannot rely on the national parks and Wilderness areas alone to support these packs. But given the Wyoming's new law, that benchmark is not likely to be maintained, and the USFWS may not have any choice but to reject Wyoming's wolf management plan.

Thus, ironically, with this new law

Wyoming may not only delay delisting of a biologically recovered animal in Wyoming, but also deep-six the delisting of wolves in Idaho and Montana as well. This is sour news, as further delays in wolf delisting will almost certainly generate more bad feelings towards wolves on the ground, and result in less cooperation during the transition period after delisting.

The second new policy that threatens to derail wolf delisting in the Northern Rocky Mountains is a decision made by the Bush Administration itself, which asserts that the 30 breeding pairs of wolves that exist in the Northern Rockies represents complete wolf recovery for most of the American West.

On April 1, USFWS expanded the Northern Rocky Mountain recovery zone to include nine new western states, in-

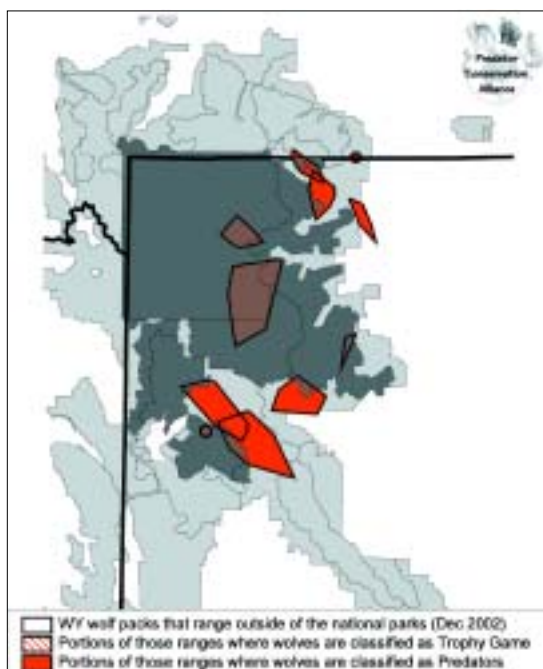
Forest Predator Ecosystem

cluding California and Colorado—without expanding the 30 breeding pair recovery benchmark that had been developed solely for Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. This inexplicable federal decision hurts ecologically and politically.

Ecologically, it shuts the door on wolf recovery in the Southern Rockies



desire to get out of the wolf recovery business as soon as possible, although these federal decisions may accomplish exactly the opposite effect, as PCA and other wildlife supporters nationwide are forced into court to assure the accurate enforcement of conservation laws.



Under Wyoming's proposed wolf policy, 7 of the 11 packs that range outside of the national parks would be classified as Predators across more than 50% of their range. The nine packs that reside completely outside of Yellowstone National Park would be protected as Trophy Game across just 16% of their range.

If Wyoming's current wolf plan is accepted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this Yellowstone wolf may be under the gun as soon as wolves are "delisted." Photo courtesy Diane Hargreaves (406) 994-9146.

and Pacific Northwest, two areas known to contain adequate habitat and public support to restore wolves. Politically, it may delay delisting of wolves in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, where biological recovery goals have been met and state management of wolves is appropriate.

This same "lumping" logic was also applied in the U.S. Northeast—as the biologically recovered wolves of the of the Great Lakes (Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan) were used to justify delisting wolves in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine (places where they have an ecological role to fill, but do not exist).

The clear motivation for this new policy is this administration's

Yet the USFWS owns the next move. Right now a panel of experts appointed by USFWS are evaluating the effectiveness of the state wolf plans of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. If the review indicates that the three state plans are adequate to protect wolves after delisting, then the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will issue a delisting proposal in early 2004.

PCA remains hopeful that the USFWS will be true to their mandate of conserving the unique and vital wildlife of our nation—which will entail rejecting Wyoming's wolf management plan. But our hope will be tempered with preparations to ensure that the USFWS's mandate serves the people and wildlife of the American West, even if the current administration chooses not to do so.

Next Steps

Road to Recovery

Tracking the ins-and-outs of government public land management can get pretty complicated—even for those whose job it is to follow them full time. In appreciation of this, we've put together an update on some of the actions we've been following- and trying to positively influence- on behalf of our exceptional Northern Rocky wildlife.

by Shawn Regnerus

Driving For Enforcement

For wildlife like wolverine and grizzly bear, wilderness- the absence of disturbance from roads, ATVs and snowmobiles- is crucial. But even the outright prohibition of motorized vehicles in Congressionally-designated Wilderness is only effective if actively enforced.

For instance, during the winter of 1994 there were 844 documented incidents of snowmobile trespass into the Gallatin National Forest's Absaroka/Beartooth Wilderness Area, near Cooke City, Montana. To address this problem, the Gallatin hired a ranger to enforce the Wilderness protections, and consequentially, the number of trespass dropped to only 36 incidents this past winter.

Yet in other areas of the Gallatin and neighboring Forests, enforcement is still badly needed. At the same time Wilderness trespass was decreasing into the Absaroka/Beartooth, increased snowmobile trespass was occurring into the Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area, located west of Cooke City on the Gallatin and Beaverhead/Deerlodge ("B/D") Forests.

Recognizing the need for more enforcement, and hoping to replicate the success experienced by the Absaroka/Beartooth Wilderness Area, the B/D National Forest applied this past summer for a grant to hire three new ATV/snowmobile rangers. To support this positive ef-

fort, an alert was sent out by PCA to encourage the public to voice their approval for increased enforcement. In response, over 50 letters supporting the enforcement grant were received by the Forest Service!

We were pleased to have been able to play a supportive role for the Forest Service's actions this time around—especially one that will allow wolverines and grizzly bears to den in peace this winter.

Northern Rocky Forest Plan Round-Up

Many of the National Forests of the Northern Rockies are currently undergoing forest plan revisions, which provide a template for management activities such as logging, road/trail use, and wildlife habitat restoration within a given National Forest for a period of 10-15 years. As such, forest plans have a tremendous effect on the quality, and quantity, of wildlife habitat on our public lands.

In recognition of the significance of National Forest planning to wildlife, Predator Conservation Alliance is strategically involved in helping shape the outcomes of these forest plans in the Northern Rockies.

Two forest plans are currently the focus of our efforts—the Gallatin and B/D National Forests' in southwest Montana. These two forests represent two of the larger National Forests in the Northern Rockies, and also link two of the last three strongholds for predator species in the lower 48 states—Yellowstone National Park and the central Idaho Wilderness complex.

Gallatin National Forest

As the first step in their forest plan revision, The Gallatin National forest has decided to develop a travel plan that will determine what kind of travel will be allowed on roads and trails for the next 10-15 years. On August 6th, the Gallatin National Forest released the alternatives for their travel plan revision. We were



Inappropriate roads along watersheds often create sediment problems, which can harm fish and drinking water for people.

Forest Predator Ecosystem

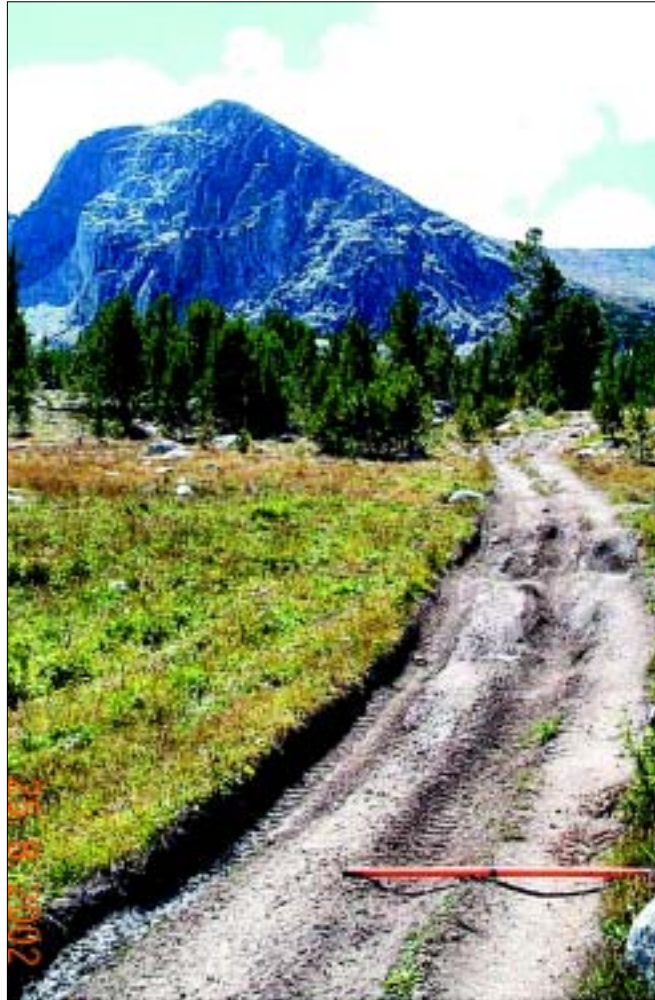
encouraged that three of the five substantive alternatives showed improvements for conserving wildlife habitat, especially when contrasted to an earlier benchmark plan. Even more encouraging is the fact that all of the substantive alternatives restrict all wheeled motorized use to designated routes, which has been one of the core principles in PCA's work on motorized access. With a "designated routes only" policy established as the starting point in all of the alternatives, we can focus on closing those individual routes most destructive to secure wildlife habitat.

Over the next several months, PCA will focus on building scientific and public support for the strengths of the plan, and working to improve the alternatives where they fall short—adequately protecting wildlife habitat from cross-country snowmobile use, and restoring areas damaged by excessive roads.

The next step in the process is analyzing impacts of the various alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will give the public another opportunity to comment on the plan. After that, they will issue an EIS, and will likely have the final plan completed by late 2004.

B/D National Forest

The B/D has just started the forest planning process with the release of



Pioneer Mountains back-country trail widened into a road by ORV damage in the Beaverhead/Deerlodge National Forest. PCA file photo.

their "scoping" notice—a public notice that asks the public to comment on the "scope" of issues that will be addressed in the Forest plan revision. The B/D will be accepting scoping comments until November 20.

While the B/D National Forest has identified travel and wildlife as two of the issues that need to be improved over their current forest plan, they have no plans to

include a site-specific, trail-by-trail analysis as part of its overall Forest Plan revision, as was included in the Gallatin National Forest Travel Plan. Instead, the Forest Service intends to use the B/D Forest Plan revision to set an overall direction for district level travel plans within B/D, to be completed after the forest plan revision.

Over the next several months, PCA will be building a broad coalition of groups and individuals in support of a B/D forest plan that balances the needs of wildlife with traditional recreational uses of the land.

It is anticipated the final version of the B/D will start taking effect on the ground mid-2005.

Setting the Course

By taking a leading role in organizing support for conservation-based forest plans in strategic locations, Predator Conservation Alliance will help promote balance on our American public lands—protecting both the needs of wildlife, and the pursuit of quiet, traditional recreation.



Shawn Regnerus is a Program Associate with our Forest Predator Protection Program. He can be reached at shawn@predatorconservation.org

The Swift Fox Jumps Over the South Dakota Border

by Kevin Honness* and
PCA's Jonathan Proctor

Swift foxes are back in parts of South Dakota that haven't seen this small canine in almost 50 years, thanks to two new reintroduction programs. The first began last October on Ted Turner's 140,000-acre Bad River Ranch; the second began this September in Badlands National Park (photos and description of the release opposite page). Both drew large crowds of well-wishers, agency biologists, and landowners who hope that reestablished populations will one day connect and restore this small prairie predator to a significant portion of its former range.

Once common throughout the grasslands of the Great Plains, the swift fox is now facing a struggle to survive. Poisoning campaigns—some aimed at wolves and other large predators, others aimed at prairie dogs—also eliminated swift foxes from most of their historic range. Especially hard hit were swift foxes in the northern Great Plains of Canada, Montana, and the Dakotas. Remaining populations exist in scattered and isolated pockets of short- and mid-grass prairies, mostly in Colorado and Wyoming.

Swift foxes were, and remain, an integral part of the wildlife of the Great Plains grasslands. Harmless to humans and livestock, and weighing less than five pounds, the swift fox eats small rodents and insects, and often hunt on prairie dog towns where these food sources are abundant. They will also eat the occasional prairie dog. The loss of wolves has also had an affect on the swift fox because in

the wolves' absence, coyote numbers have exploded on the Great Plains. Coyotes, in turn, are a swift fox's greatest predator, and even in areas with holes in which to escape—including badger and prairie dog holes—swift foxes are effected by the presence of coyotes.

Last fall's reintroduction on Turner's Bad River Ranch is already proving promising. Turner Endangered Species Fund biologists "hard-released" 22 foxes last fall ("hard-release" means opening the cages and letting the swift foxes go where they will, without intermediate adjustments).

Of the 22 foxes hard-released at Bad

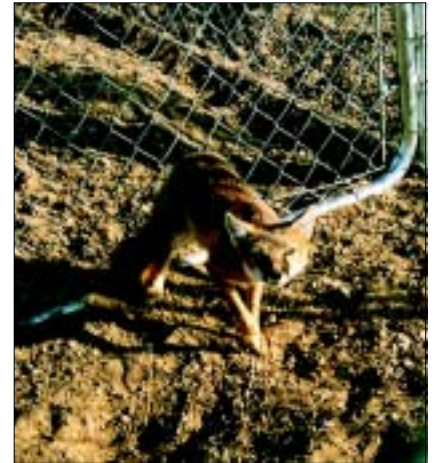
River Ranch, eight remain alive and are regularly located; eight are known mortalities—four killed by coyotes and four lost to vehicle collisions; and the remaining six are unaccounted for. But good news followed—four litters of wild-born pups were born to the surviving adults this spring, their very first at Bad River!

In addition to the hard-released foxes, eight other adults and 12 offspring were "soft-released" in spring (held on the prairie in pens through the winter to encourage breeding). Once Turner biologists receive information on the status of the soft-release foxes, they will analyze the



Swift fox looking before he runs at a Bad River Ranch release. Photo by Lu Carbyn.

Grassland Predator Ecosystem



Badlands National Park, South Dakota



This September, the National Park Service released thirty swift foxes in Badlands National Park. Badlands was chosen as a reintroduction site because it has the best potential of any Park unit in the Great Plains region for foxes, and it also has the added benefit of being close to Bad River Ranch. Two more years of releases are planned, and, if successful, the swift fox will join the bison, bighorn sheep, and black-footed ferret as species achieving successful returns to Badlands National Park.



Clockwise from top left: a. Badlands National Park, South Dakota, September 2003. PCA photo. b. "Soft-release" swift fox pens at Badlands. Photo courtesy Rob Gardner. c. Swift fox adult in pen. Photo courtesy Rob Gardner. d. Foxes use man-made holes inside the pens for shelter. PCA photo. e. Park Service employees providing some background about the swift fox before the release. Photo courtesy Rob Gardner. f. "Take your marks- get set..." g. "GO!" The circled blur is a swift fox living up to its name upon release. Photo courtesy Rob Gardner.

differences in initial movements and survival between the hard- and soft-released foxes to guide further reintroductions. Releasing 30 or more foxes each year will continue until a self-sustaining population of 100-200 foxes are re-established in the recovery area.

Swift foxes are currently listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act in South Dakota. We are hopeful that these two reintroduction efforts will help restore a self-sustaining population across a large part of the state, and be a springboard for foxes to fulfill their eco-

logical role across the entire Northern Plains.

* Kevin Honness serves as project leader for the Swift Fox Recovery Project with the Turner Endangered Species Fund on the Bad River Ranches. Email: honness@wcnecet.com

Coexisting with Predators Program Up and Running

by Janelle Holden

In early April, Predator Conservation Alliance initiated its newest program: *Coexisting with Predators*. The program is the culmination of two years of creative thinking on the part of PCA's staff, board, and the conservation community about ways to reduce conflicts between people and predators. PCA set the stage for the program by making coexistence the focus of its 2002 annual conference, and introducing it in the Winter 2003 newsletter.

The program's objective is to work with people who live, work and recreate in predator country to establish stewardship, incentive and community programs that lead to reduced conflicts between people and predators. This education and outreach effort, focused in the Northern Rockies, addresses the social side of predator conservation—human tolerance, acceptance and, ultimately, coexistence.

Predator Conservation Alliance is already, or will soon be, working with those that experience the most conflicts with predators:

- 1) agricultural landowners;
- 2) conservation-minded landowners;
- 3) homeowners who live next to wild-land habitats;
- 4) hunters; and
- 5) backcountry recreationists.

On the predator side, we are focusing on those species that are the subject of most conflict—the wolf, grizzly bear, black bear, mountain lion and coyote.

With a generous start-up grant from the Arthur B. Schultz Foundation in Alta, Wyoming, in April we hired Janelle Holden as the director of the *Coexisting*

response to this conflict hotspot, PCA has established a partnership with the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group and the Turner Endangered Species Fund to develop a “Range Rider” program for next summer that we hope will help reduce the number of wolves and livestock that get killed. We hope to test, over a 3-5 year period, whether increased human presence helps reduce livestock loss.

Also on the agricultural front, PCA just finished working with the original founders of the *Predator Friendly* certification program to transfer the promotion and management responsibilities of that program to Predator Conservation Alliance. As you may know, this is an economic incentive program that uses the “predator friendly” label to help ranchers who use non-le-



Guard animals, such as this llama being used in Montana, is one method to discourage predation from Northern Rocky wildlife. Photo by William Campbell.

with Predators program. In five months of learning the lay of the land, Janelle has identified our initial priority: a focus on initial field-based stewardship and incentive programs in agricultural and residential areas, where people and predators experience the most conflict.

For instance, ranchers in Montana's Madison Valley are increasingly suffering livestock losses as wolves migrate out of Yellowstone National Park. These losses can result in wolves being lethally controlled, as was the case this summer. In

The program's objective is to work with people who live, work and recreate in predator country to establish stewardship, incentive and community programs that lead to reduced conflicts between people and predators.

Coexisting with Predators

that conflict reduction measures get a higher return on their sheep or cattle products through the conservation-minded market.

In consultation with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department bear managers, we have learned of eight areas around Bozeman and Livingston, Montana where we can begin work in residential areas that experience chronic bear problems. Together, we have identified ways PCA can complement the state's *Living with Wildlife* program, including organizing neighborhood meetings, where we will present ways to reduce bear attractants in these communities, and work with those residents to implement community projects that address the problem.

To help inform and facilitate our stewardship and public education programs, PCA is developing a central repository, or clearinghouse, of information on the subject of reducing human/predator conflicts. This web-based resource will include a comprehensive presentation and analysis of options for reducing conflicts between people and predators, what resources are available to help people take these steps, and why taking these steps will benefit them, their community and the region as a whole.

PCA also wants to encourage the public to get involved, whether through on-the-ground stewardship opportunities or letting opinion leaders and decision makers know they support this emerging aspect of predator conservation. Showing that it is possible to get beyond "battle mentality" to a place where diverse groups

New Staff

Janelle Holden Program Director Coexisting with Predators Program

Even though she doesn't wear a cowboy hat or boots, Predator Conservation Alliance's new *Coexisting with Predators* Program Director is at home on the range. Born and raised on a Montana cattle ranch, Janelle Holden spent most of her youth learning first-hand how to coexist with predators on Montana's Rocky Mountain Front.

Before eventually moving back to her home state, Janelle began her career(s) on Capitol Hill working for two western U.S. congressmen, Senators Conrad Burns (Montana) and Larry Craig (Idaho). After seeing the light, Janelle then worked in southwestern Colorado as a public lands reporter for the *Cortez Journal* and *Durango Herald*. Her experiences also led her back to her alma mater, Hillsdale College in Michigan, to teach journalism for a year at the school where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in English.



Janelle and her husband, Doug Blaine, traveled to Bozeman this spring from Yosemite National Park, where Doug was working as a naturalist instructor for Yosemite Institute. Now that she's here, Janelle is looking forward to helping the wild animals, and people, of the American West she loves to coexist.

are working together will go a long way toward establishing a balance between the needs of people and predators. Because ultimately, PCA's *Coexisting with Preda-*

tors program is as much about helping people live with these animals as it is about protecting them—because without the former, we will not accomplish the latter.

Biodiversity's Shield Now Endangered

by Brock Evans

Nearly three decades ago, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Endangered Species Act, by a 355-4 margin in the House and 92-0 in the Senate. Our most revolutionary, our strongest—and our most denounced—environmental law was signed by President Nixon with little fanfare on December 28, 1973.

How little we understood the enormity of the ESA then, the incredible—positive—effect it was to have on our country far into the future. Only because of it do hundreds of unique species which share the nation with us still exist at all. Just as significantly, millions of acres of forests, beaches, wetlands, and wild places—those species' essential habitats—also survive.

That's because the Endangered Species Act is more than just a wildlife protection law. It is also a land use statute. Because the ESA exists, millions of acres of the best of wild America also still exist—acres which surely would have been developed otherwise.

Today there are over 1250 U.S. species on the list. There ought to be more, and the whole enterprise needs better funding and support. It's not a perfect law. But we should ask ourselves: what if the ESA had never existed at all? What then? How many species, forests, open spaces, wild places now protected, would there still be? If it falls, what will happen to what's left?

We may soon find out, because as this is written, the entire law, not to mention its funding and legal support, is under the fiercest and most sustained assault in its history. How can this be?

After the 2002 elections, the far right is sensing victory at last. Already, on public lands across the nation, the law is being implemented by a Secretary of Interior who has asserted that the ESA is unconstitutional and backed up by a President whose close ties to extractive industries don't even raise eyebrows. With industry-favored appointees in every key post, carefully disguised administrative reforms are being crafted to undermine the gains of the last thirty years.

If the ESA is lost, we lose something even more precious than the marvelous and wondrous creatures that will surely go extinct without its protections.

In the courts, a series of rulings and sweetheart settlements of industry lawsuits have put the listing of some two dozen Pacific coast salmon and steelhead species in doubt and undermined the act's critical habitat protection for many others. The hounds are baying in Congress too, with the ascension of wise use darling and ESA foe, Rep. Richard Pombo, to chairmanship of the House Resources Committee.

Given the current political climate of the country, I would not venture a prediction on how this will end. I only know that it will be a struggle and that we must

not fail. If the ESA is lost, we lose something even more precious than the marvelous and wondrous creatures that will surely go extinct without its protections. We also lose our hopes for a better, a more gentle, future for this great, yet troubled nation of ours.

This is because the Endangered Species Act has been much more than just a magnificent tool to protect wild and natural America. It is a profoundly moral statement, uniquely American in its vision, its optimism, and its promise. Back in 1973 the legislators of a great nation said—for the first time in history—that henceforth, that nation would not permit any of the living species of plants and animals which shared its national territory to become extinct—not if we could prevent it.

It is hard to imagine a more powerful educational tool, either. The existence of the ESA has profoundly altered the American psyche about biodiversity and its importance to our own health and



Brock Evans serves as executive director for the Endangered Species Coalition, www.stopextinction.org.

Endangered Species Act Essential to Northern Rockies Restoration



Wolves

- ▼ Listed for Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections in 1973
- ▼ Recovery zones and population goals defined in 1987
- ▼ Decision to reintroduce wolves to Yellowstone and Idaho final in 1994
- ▼ Biological recovery goals met in 2002; now awaiting adequate state regulations to delist (see pages 8-9)



Grizzly Bears

- ▼ Listed for ESA protections in 1975
- ▼ Recovery plans completed in 1982 and 1993
- ▼ Full recovery of grizzly bears in the Northern Rockies will be a long-term challenge, but there is clear evidence of population expansion in Greater Yellowstone. A recent analysis reached the following conclusion:
“Without reductions in human lethality after 1970, there would have been no chance that core grizzly bear range would be as extensive as it is now... This is direct evidence for the dramatic beneficial effect of conservation poli-

cies enacted through legislation such as the U.S. Endangered Species Act” (Conservation Biology 16(4):1123-1136).



Lynx

- ▼ Petitioned for ESA protections in 1994
- ▼ Compilation of Lynx Science Report completed in 1999, newly funded field research and surveys still ongoing
- ▼ Listed for ESA protections in 2000
- ▼ Montana closes its lynx trapping season in 2000, the last area of the lower 48 to still allow it
- ▼ Interagency Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy (LCAS) completed in 2000
- ▼ Implementation of LCAS in national forest plan amendments still pending



Wolverines

- ▼ Petitioned for ESA protections in 1994 and again in 2000
- ▼ Settlement reached with USDI to rule on the 2000 petition by October 2003
- ▼ Compilation of Wolverine Science Report and newly funded field research now underway

Photo: Wolf by Dan and Cindy Hartman; Lynx by Rich Reading; Wolverine by Jeff Copeland; Grizzly bear, PCA file photo.

national well-being. Each battle over listing, over critical habitats, over regulations, has educated more citizens about the importance of the whole web of life around us—plants and mice and mussels, as well as the larger charismatic animals. The re-

sult—if the polls are to be believed—is that millions now understand more of what biodiversity is all about than they would have ever known had there not been a strong law, strongly enforced.

We now must ask ourselves: what

would our country's landscape, and the precious living web of wondrous other beings it supports, be like if the ESA had never existed? What's the alternative? To us, the answer is simple: we must keep its vision and its promise intact.

A Conversation with Author David Quammen

Interviewed by Jon Schwedler

Where did the idea for *Monster of God* come from?

The idea originally hatched in my head way back in 1992 on the island of Komodo, in connection with researching my earlier book on islands, evolution and extinction—*Song of the Dodo*. I went there to learn about Komodo dragons because they were part of the phenomena of gigantism among island species. But, while I was there, I also spoke with some local people who suffered some predation by Komodo dragons, and got very interested in the relationship between large, occasionally man-eater beasts and the people who share the landscape with them.

The topic didn't emerge for me again until 1997, when I went to western India in the Gir Forest to do a magazine piece on the last remaining population of Asiatic lions in the world—300 individuals surviving in this little forest enclave.

At that point, I decided I had to write about the relationship between people and big predators, both from an ecological perspective and a more mythic, psychological perspective.

What made this topic particularly interesting to you?

Well, I was really struck by the level of tolerance that the local people of India's Gir Forest, the Maldhari, had for the big predators. The Maldhari are a stockherding people, a very traditional people—maybe the equivalent to our country's Amish—who raise buffalo and cows in the Gir Forest and coexist with the lion. As I had conversations with these people, I found myself surprised by their statements that expressed a certain "Hindu-calm," or an acceptance that their lives happened within the context of big predators. One that, at some point, could involve an attack on their livestock or themselves.

In general, they seemed to believe "there's nothing wrong with the animal, the animal is good, this is simply one of the dangers of the world we live in."

After the Maldhari, I wanted to talk with more local people around the world who share landscapes with big predators—the aboriginal people and salt-water crocodile of northern Australia, the shepherds and brown bears of Romania, and the Udege people and Siberian tigers of the Far East. And not just an investigation about their physical relationship, but also the spiritual.

As a natural history author and magazine columnist, David Quammen has traveled all over the world in search of our planet's story, as told through living things. His intense passion for discovery and wonder fueled 30 years of literary study, shared enthusiastically with his readers. His book on island biogeography, *Song of the Dodo*, received the John Burroughs Medal for natural history writing. He has also written three additional non-fiction books, four fiction titles, and contributions to *National Geographic*, *NG Adventure*, *Outside*, and *Harper's*, which earned him the Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the National Magazine Award in Essays and Criticism. This fall he releases his latest nonfiction book, *Monster of God*, an exploration into the world of some of our planet's "alpha predators," and the ambiguous relationship they have with local people—ecologically, socially and psychologically.

As David resides in the Montana, a place where our own country's magnificent diversity of alpha predators is on display, his international work affords him a unique perspective on the role of people and wildlife in the Northern Rockies, one we were fortunate enough to have him share with us. (David's responses have been paraphrased in consideration of space).



Gnawing on the Bones

Besides living near big predators, were there commonalities among these groups of people?

First, it should be noted that there was a diversity of opinion about predators within each group, just as with any other group of people. This surprised me somewhat, but it shouldn't have. For instance, there was a young shepherd in Romania who said "to hell with the bears, shoot them all," but other shepherds felt the bears were "the treasure of the forest." In Australia, there were people for whom the crocodile was their ancestral deity, the "Baru"—and yet other groups nearby who wanted the government to get rid of the crocodiles.

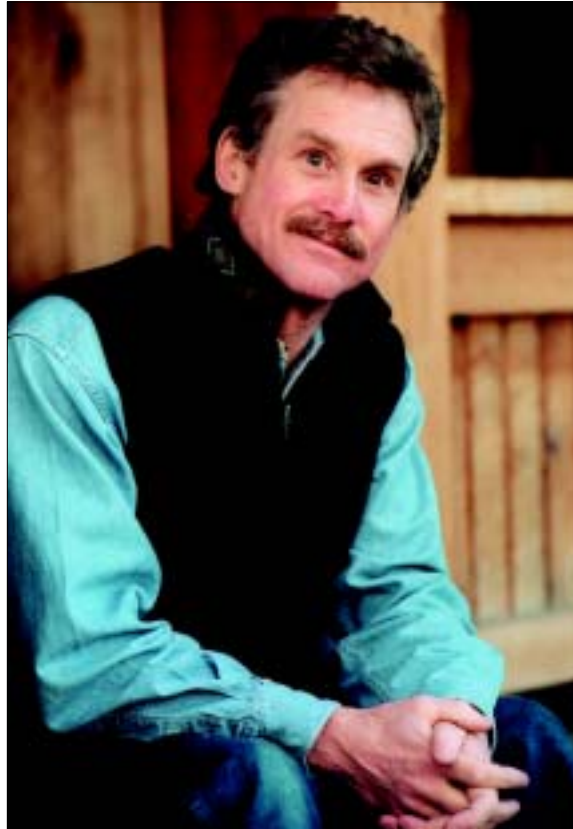
Second, an essential thing that emerged was that different cultures have different levels of tolerance for different kinds of risk. For example, here in the United States we have 40,000 people killed in automobiles a year, a risk most of us accept. But if 15 people were to die in a nuclear power industry accident, it would be a very bad day for the nuclear power industry. Closer to home in Montana, we have people who are willing to accept the proven risk of smoking Marlboros, but unwilling to accept the risk of a large predator taking some of their livestock.

For these international cultures sharing landscapes with big predators, the risk of conflict is simply tolerated as one of the acceptable risks they were willing to live with. In the end, it seems the determining factor is not any absolute measure about the *size* of the risk, but more the *flavor* of the risk for that culture. It would be far more egregious for a Maldhari to be killed by an automobile than a lion.

Are there attitudes you think can be transferred to the American West from these other cultures that coexist with predators?

That's a hard question. I don't know if the attitudes of folks who have been raising livestock for years in the West, who are persuaded that wolves and bears are the bane of their exist-

ence, can be changed. But maybe the imagination and awareness of the next generation can be changed, through various forms of education and entertainment, awakening them to the fact that these big predators are an important part of our world.



David Quammen, author of *Monster of God*. Photo by Lynn Donaldson.

If the attitudes of the next generation aren't changed, and big predators aren't around anymore, what have we lost?

They are the prototype form of "charismatic megafauna"—important, spectacular, beautiful, ferocious, dangerous, rare, elusive, and don't care if we live or die. They're "bigger" than us, in a lot of senses—but also inconvenient and expensive.

We want to preserve them as convenient vouchers of majesty and ferocity to name our cars and sports teams after, and yet we don't want to be annoyed with the dangers and the costs of allowing them to exist within their larger context in the ecosystem and wild. We can't have it both ways, and if these big predators are reduced to zoo animals over the next 150 years, they're going to lose that magic. They'll be big, peculiar creatures behind glass—they just won't have the same "mojo" anymore.

Why are these animals important to you personally?

When I first moved from the Midwest to Montana 30 years ago, I would regularly go up on the western side of Glacier and take walks along the North Fork creek drainages. Occasionally, I would see a grizzly bear—and that would make the hair on the back of my neck stand up. I suppose that, as much as anything else, gave me an appreciation for the humbling thrill of walking in a forest with big predators.

In short, the world is uglier, more boring, and more lonely without them.

David Quammen's book, *Monster of God*, published by W.W. Norton & Company, will be available in bookstores and online this fall.

Out of Region

Wildlife News Beyond the Northern Rockies and Northern Plains

Births Bolster Hope to Restore CO's Missing Lynx

The Colorado Division of Wildlife has documented a total of 16 lynx kittens born this year. The two most recent were a brother and sister found at a secluded den near a steep, rocky slope at 11,000 feet, according to the Division's website. This was the first year that reproduction was documented in Colorado since lynx were first reintroduced in 1999. A total of 129 lynx have been released thus far, and the Division plans to release as many as 130 additional lynx over the next four years. The program alleviated initial problems of low survivorship by changing to a "soft-release" protocol, whereby lynx were held in captivity and "fattened-up" prior to their release. The problem of low reproduction may be improved by releasing increased numbers of lynx to create higher population densities—increasing the likelihood that reproductively-fit lynx would be able to find each other in the years ahead.



Newest member of the Colorado lynx population, born this past spring. Photo courtesy Grant Merrill.

Love the One You're With?

While the Colorado lynx population is increasing with the help of the human species, lynx in Minnesota are facing a new threat from another: hybridization with bobcats. According to a summer announcement by the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, three of 19 lynx found in the Superior National Forest were actually lynx/bobcat hybrids. Original DNA tests per-

formed in Minnesota were later confirmed in Montana. Biologists were surprised by the findings, which are believed to be the first documented cases of lynx/bobcat hybrids anywhere, but lynx hybridization may be a sign of the cat having a hard time finding a mate within its own species. Overlap between the two wildcats' ranges is rare, as lynx prefer areas in the northern part of the state with deep snow, allowing them to take advantage of their snowshoe-like paws. Bobcats, in contrast, are generalists that have adapted to many other areas throughout the state. The hybrid finding may ultimately complicate lynx restoration, as was the case in the efforts to restore the red wolf of the southeast U.S.

A Wolf Plan for...Illinois?

As several Northern Rocky states are now grappling with the development of wolf management plans, wolves are popping up in other parts of the country as well.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confirmed in July that a canine shot in December 2002 near Henry, Illinois, was a gray wolf. It is believed that the wolf, which



"Who, me?" Wolf from Great Lakes population pauses to pose during his travels. Photo courtesy RNW.

is the first confirmed in the state for over 100 years, originated from one of the Great Lakes packs in Michigan, Minnesota, or Wisconsin. Within the past two years, individual wolves have also been confirmed in Indiana and Missouri.

Canadian Minister: Report on Bear Market is Bull

A summer report, which concluded that people who pay to watch grizzlies in British Columbia generate nearly twice as much income than those who hunt grizzlies, was downplayed by the province's Water, Land and Air Protection Minister, Joyce Murray. Research funded by the Raincoast Conservation Society found that grizzly



Wildlife-watchers can generate significant revenue—bear-watchers in British Columbia brought in more money to the province than bear hunters did in 2002.

ecotourism brought over \$6.1 million to the province's communities in 2002, while hunting brought in \$3.3 million. Murray stated the grizzly population could support both ecotourism and hunting, even though the report asserted that continued hunting would degrade ecotourism opportunities and reduce the overall economic return to the province over the next 20 years.

A Wyoming Rancher with a Heart for Predators

by Janelle Holden

Balance is the word Virginia Purdy stresses when she talks about predators. “I like to see a balance in nature,” says Purdy, a long-time member of Predator Conservation Alliance and a Wyoming rancher. “I have witnessed the time when predators have done us a great service of cleaning up carcasses (of deer and elk) on the ranch.”

Her “clean-up” committee includes nearly every type of predator—mountain lion, coyote, wolverine, fox, and badger.

Purdy, 87, has been a rancher since 1939, when she purchased a dude ranch adjoining her uncle’s homestead near Buffalo, Wyoming, in the northeast quadrant of the state. In the 1950’s, she married Robert Purdy, and today their son James Purdy and his family are carrying the ranch on by raising registered quarter horses and a commercial registered cattle.

For decades the Purdys have owned cattle and sheep, and Virginia relates their losses have been minimal to predators. “Were it not for the stockmen that are employed by the ranch we would lose more animals to predators. Their constant supervision and care prevents predation.”

Purdy says she values predators because they remove the sick and the weak from elk and deer herds, and improve the gene pool. She also believes strongly that wolves should be a part of the western landscape.

“That animal belongs here,” she said. “It was here when the Indians were here, and the buffalo were here.”

For a rancher, Purdy’s beliefs about predators are unusual, but she said she finds that most people accept them even if they don’t agree with them. She also acknowledged she couldn’t get everything she wants accomplished without family support.

Purdy was raised on a purebred Holstein farm in Wisconsin, but said she always had a hankering for the West. “I thought it was heck of a lot more fun to sit on a beautiful horse in the mountains of Wyoming than to sit next to a milk cow in the middle of Wisconsin,” she says.

And Virginia’s connection to predator species goes beyond just the ranch—the Purdy Family Foundation, in concert with the University of Wyoming, is setting aside areas of the Big Horn Mountains to use for forestry, range management, and horticulture classes at Sheridan College. “People go to the hills and the mountains for peace and quiet and a little clean air, so let’s save a little of it for them,” she says. “I believe in giving something back to nature.”

PCA applauds Virginia Purdy for her support of wildlife, and thanks her for her contributions—both on and off the ranch.

“People go to the hills and the mountains for peace and quiet and a little clean air, so let’s save a little of it for them.”

—Virginia Purdy



Wyoming rancher and PCA member, Virginia Purdy. Photo courtesy of the Purdy family.

The Art of Life

Jacqueline Rieder Hud, Artist and PCA Board Member

by Cecily Clemons



PCA board member Jacquie Rieder Hud at one of her showings, here at the French Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

**“We must all do our part to
bring our wilderness back
in balance, which is
why I'm a part of PCA.”**

— Jacqueline Rieder Hud

Predator Conservation Alliance is honored to have Jacqueline Rieder Hud as one of its “own.” Before moving back to Montana in 1994, Jacquie and her husband lived in Venice Beach, California, a creative community offering a wide variety of life experience. After earning a Bachelor of Fine Art in Painting & Drawing from California State University, Long Beach, Jacquie was drawn to Tom Hayden's bid for State Assembly in 1982 because of her commitment to environmental concerns. It was an exciting four years serving on Assemblyman Hayden's, and wife Jane Fonda's, “Fundraising Committee.”

But Jacquie's truest nature was beckoning- one of artistic introspection- and she curtailed political involvement in favor of the journey inward. Her impressive “curricula vitae” includes exhibitions in New York, France, and, of course, Los Angeles, as well as artwork appearances in several films.

Jacquie's paintings and drawings reflect her communion with the earth and animal spirits. Her work is a record of her dreamstates and psychic shifts within her body.

“When the unconscious gives me an image, I honor it and work with it. It is truly a process of entering the chaos that lies at the bottom of the human condition and coming out the other side to a place of healing. In doing so, I feel I am becoming more effective in my work to save the wilderness areas that remain a

symbol to me of the Soul that modern man has cast aside.”

Affinity for the work of Predator Conservation Alliance? You bet! Jacquie was drawn to PCA, and was impressed by our work and with our involvement many years ago with Predator Friendly Inc. (for more information on Predator Friendly Inc., see page 18).

“Back then, PCA's approach to balance with nature was unique—and PCA continues to be unique. We are now in a time of unprecedented development into wilderness areas and diminishing availability of foundation funds, and as the human population grows exponentially, the salvation of these magnificent creatures takes on mythic proportion. We must all do our part to bring our wilderness areas back in balance, which is why I'm a part of PCA.”

Jacquie resides on a homestead ranch outside of Bozeman with....three horses, two mules, a donkey, 20 cats, a dog named Harley and a husband named John.

“I feel a sense of union with animal spirits and an admiration for their rhythmic interaction with their environment, a rhythm that Man, as Animal, has long forgotten.”



For more information,
please contact Cecily
Clemons, Development
Director at Cecily@predatorconservation.org

The Gallery



"The Ascension Of Umar Rafal"



"Blue Rumble: The Invitation"



"Blue Tango: Song of Earth"



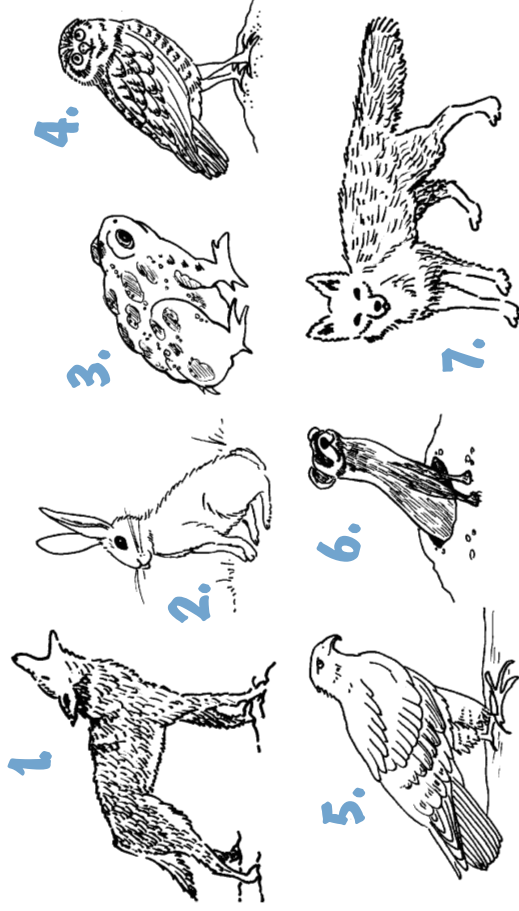
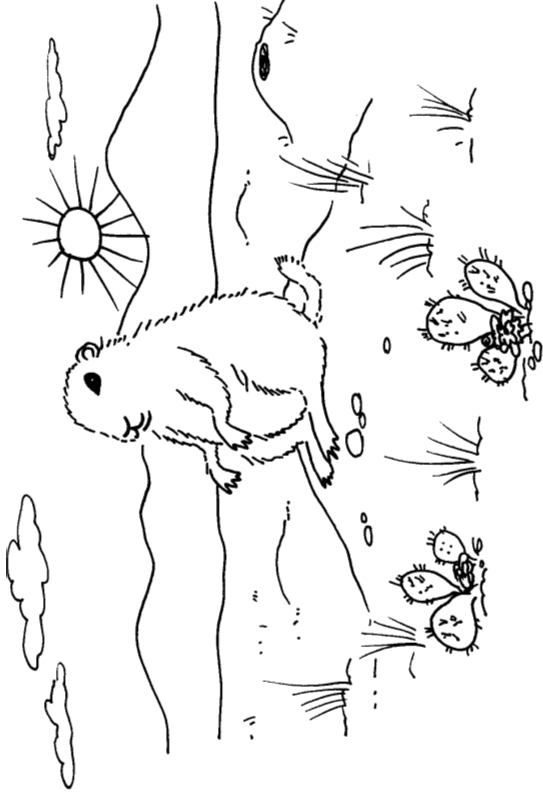
"Wind Warriors...a song of the Earth"

Jacque donates an immediate portion of proceeds from the sale of her prints and postcards to PCA. To learn more about Jacque and her work, visit www.jriederhud.com

KID'S PAGE

Who Needs An Old Prairie Dog Anyway?

Color in everyone who does. (Answers upside-down at right.)



Answer: They all do!

1. The wily *Coyote* hunts prairie dogs for food a lot, but most of the time prairie dogs are smarter than him and know he's coming!
2. The *Cottontail Rabbit* can be found living in abandoned prairie dog burrows.
3. The *Great Plains Toad* can be found living in abandoned burrows also.
4. The *Burrowing Owl*, whose numbers are becoming scarce, lives in abandoned prairie dog burrows.
5. *Hawks* and *Eagles* rely on prairie dogs as a food source.
6. The *Black-Footed Ferret*, who is listed as an Endangered Species, relies completely on the prairie dog for a home and for a food source.
7. The *Swift Fox* uses prairie dog holes to hide from coyotes.

Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs are a "Keystone Species." This means that they have over 150 other critters that live with them or need them in some way to assure their own survival. Prairie Dog Specialists, Inc.



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