



# *On the Wild Side*

*American Wildlands' 2008 Annual Report*





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**American Wildlands**  
321 East Main, Suite 418  
Bozeman, Montana 59715  
(406) 586-8175

**Missoula Field Office**  
114 W. Pine St. Suite 4  
Missoula, MT 59802  
(406) 728-2087

**Dillon Field Office**  
215 E. Helena  
Dillon, MT 59725  
(406) 925-3081

**[www.wildlands.org](http://www.wildlands.org)**



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Program Coordinator

*American Wildlands is keeping the world-renowned  
U.S. Northern Rockies ecologically intact  
by restoring and maintaining connections between  
key habitats for healthy populations of native wildlife.*

**COVER PHOTOS:** Both pictures are of priority habitat linkage areas identified by American Wildlands' *Corridors of Life* Priority Linkage Assessment. (*Front*) Gravelly Mountains to Snowcrest Mountains in the High Divide area of southwest Montana. (*Back*) The Evaro linkage area is a critical habitat link between the Crown, Cabinet-Yaak, and Salmon-Selway ecosystems. Photos by Chris Boyer, Kestrel Aerial ([www.kestrelaerial.com](http://www.kestrelaerial.com))

**DESIGNER:** Amy Kelley, Bozeman, Montana.



## Connecting Past Accomplishments with Future Successes



By Marilyn Cowgill, Board  
Chair and Tom Skeele,  
Executive Director



**T**his year, American Wildlands has been celebrating 30 years of conservation programs and accomplishments. This significant milestone has provided the staff and Board of Directors a great opportunity to reflect on AWL's focus and influence over the years. Two very important realizations have emerged from that process—one with a 30 year perspective that brought us increased focus for our work, and one with a three year perspective that brought us increased excitement about our work.

Through our 30th anniversary events in mid-July, the staff and Board re-connected with many of American Wildlands' important players of the past—none more so than AWL co-founder Sally Ranney. While comparing notes between now and then, Sally confirmed two things for us:

1) Our present approach to conservation has been the foundation of AWL's efforts since Day 1—to use science, respectful advocacy, community engagement and the most cutting edge conservation tools as the foundation of our work to protect the vast wildlands and abundant wildlife of the west.

2) American Wildlands' present focus on conserving wildlife corridors grew out of a need to maintain the ecological connections between the core habitats of wilderness areas and other roadless lands that American Wildlands championed in its earlier years.

The staff and Board have benefited from this 30 year perspective—knowing that our efforts today are in the tradition of, and tied to, the work of those American Wildlanders before us.

As for the three year perspective, recently the staff and Board have had ample opportunity to review the progress we have made since we set out in 2006 to advance the organization to its “next level” of focus, capacity and influence. Recent comments by staff and Board members speak to how American Wildlands is the most focused, most capable and most influential it has been in years—and that is saying something, given our track record.

For instance, our GIS Lab Manager Sarah Olimb recently wrote, “When I joined AWL in June 2006, I got the sense the organization was unsure of its focus and direction. In the last two years, I have seen a resurgence and intensification of our mission and purpose. We are the corridors group, and I come to work every day knowing that my efforts are protecting the vital wildlife connections of the region.”

Elizabeth Williamson, AWL's Safe Passages Program Coordinator, echoed that sentiment when she recently said, “Right now, American Wildlands is tighter to its mission, has better organizational resources, and is an overall better outfit to work for than in all the seven years I have worked here.”

Finally, six year Board member Seth Wilson recently said of AWL's influence: “American Wildlands is making critically important connections with biologists, policy makers, and the public to advance conservation in times of ecological uncertainty. What is certain, however, is that AWL is moving in the right direction, at the right time, to bring the right ideas to the forefront of regional and national habitat connectivity conservation work.”

We couldn't agree more! And . . . we could not have done it without you—our members and supporters, with the financial, political and emotional support you provide. Given the critical role each of you has played in American Wildlands' increase in focus, capacity and influence, we encourage you to look back on what we all have accomplished during the last year. It's a great story. Better yet, it sets the stage for the next three years, the next 30 years, of conservation successes by American Wildlands—on behalf of America's wild lands and wildlife.

## Keeping Wildlife Populations Connected Through Habitat Corridors

**A**merican Wildlands is known as the “wildlife corridors” group, because of our fifteen-year focus on identifying, prioritizing, and conserving wildlife movement corridors. This is an appropriate brand, given our mission statement: *Keeping the world-renowned U.S. Northern Rockies ecologically intact by restoring and maintaining connections between key habitats for healthy populations of native wildlife.*

While the importance of habitat connections and wildlife corridors has been gaining attention for more than a decade, it seems to have reached a tipping point in the last two years. As one of the first non-government organizations (NGOs) to recognize and promote the need for wildlife corridors, American Wildlands is pleased to see how many agencies and organizations are now focusing on this critical conservation issue.

This increase in attention and resources has manifested itself in a number of significant habitat connectivity initiatives in the region: [1] The Western Governors Association Wildlife Corridors Policy Initiative; [2] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reversing its decision to remove the Northern Rockies gray

wolf from the endangered species list, in part due to concerns about a potential lack of connectivity between regional wolf populations; [3] Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks initiating a “Corridors and Crucial Areas Initiative”; [4] Montana Department of Transportation’s increased commitment to creating wildlife safe passages (Highway 93 north of Missoula, 1-90 near Bozeman, and Highway 206 east of Kalispell); and [5] Patagonia Inc.’s new *Freedom to Roam* campaign.

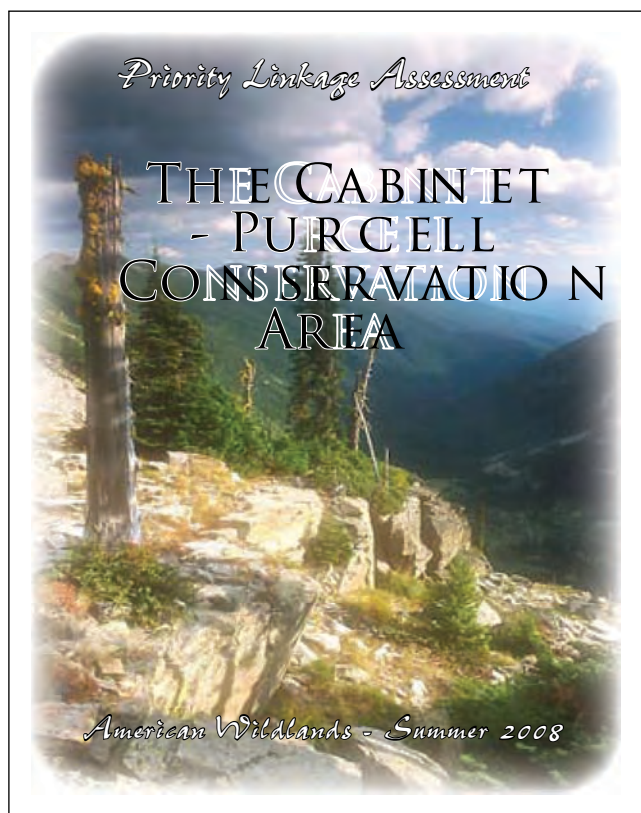
These examples, coupled with a growing number of conservation and community groups focusing on wildlife connectivity, represent a new era of conservation concern: biologists, resource managers, legislators, and communities are all recognizing that protecting core habitats is not enough—that for long term sustainability of wildlife, wildlife corridors must be maintained.

### Major Accomplishments for FY 2008

**D**uring 2008, American Wildlands played a uniquely supportive role in most of the above-mentioned efforts, and many others, in the region—all while advancing our own *Corridors of Life* projects. Each project fell into one of AWL’s areas of strategic

focus: [1] collecting and disseminating the best available science, [2] informing and influencing agency planning and policies, [3] forming and/or facilitating partnerships and local working groups, and [4] informing and engaging the public. Important accomplishments include:

**Collecting and Disseminating Science:** AWL completed our “Priority Linkage Assessment,” an expert-opinion based assessment of the most important wildlife corridors, or habitat “linkages,” throughout





the region. With financial support from eight foundations, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, we interviewed 80 federal, state and independent biologists, and identified more than 120 critical habitat linkages throughout the region. We are thrilled to have shared our corridors information with a diversity of conservation interests: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Montana Department of Transportation; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; Western Governors Association; county planners; The Nature Conservancy; Defenders of Wildlife, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative; and many more organizations.

**Informing and Influencing Planning and Policies:** Our Priority Linkage Assessment identified a diversity of threats to wildlife habitat connectivity including: private land development and lack of county planning; logging and energy development on public lands; road building and motorized recreation on public lands; wildlife mortality on highways and railroads. The results of our assessment are being used by agencies and other conservation NGOs to influence land and wildlife agency policies and planning processes related to these threats. For instance, the Bureau of Land Management, other NGOs and AWL used our data to argue against new energy transmission lines crossing three of our identified habitat linkages in the High Divide area of southwest Montana. As a result, the two most ecologically-damaging transmission lines were withdrawn from consideration.

**Partnerships and Local Working Groups:** As an example of the importance of our partnerships with local working groups, in 2008 AWL organized the Continental Divide Working Group to address a proposed biathlon facility in the MacDonald Pass wildlife corridor (see page 11). Together, we secured funding for field research that helped explain why this place is important to wildlife (including the imperiled lynx), held meetings with key decision-makers and opinion leaders about the ecological and social impacts of the project, and rallied citizens



to speak at public hearings and write letters in opposition to this proposal. Under its own steam, the working group is now addressing other opportunities to protect the Continental Divide habitat in and around MacDonald Pass.

*As a result of AWL's Priority Linkage Assessment data, the two most ecologically-damaging transmission lines were withdrawn from consideration.*

**Public Education and Outreach:** To celebrate our 30th anniversary, in mid-July AWL hosted a week of public speakers discussing a range of topics related to our mission—culminating in a day long International Habitat Connectivity Symposium. Details of this week of events, including the speakers from Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe, can be found on page 12.

## 2009 and Beyond

AWL has developed a multi-year strategy to orchestrate and facilitate local conservation efforts to maintain these 120 critical wildlife movement corridors throughout the Northern Rockies. We will continue working with state and federal agencies, conservation NGOs, community groups, county planners, landowners and others to conserve these priority linkage areas. We will also begin incorporating the need for wildlife to be able to adapt to the effects of climate change in our corridors identification and conservation efforts.

## Making Highways Safer for Wildlife and People

**W**hy did the chicken cross the road? To get to the other side, of course.”

This well-known one-liner is also appropriate for deer, elk, moose, bears, wolves and other wildlife as they move about the landscape from habitat to habitat. Just as people must be able to safely travel from one town to another to meet our needs, wide ranging animals must be able to safely travel between important habitats to meet their needs—including across busy highways.

Biologists that American Wildlands work with tell us that maintaining wildlife corridors is one of the most pressing challenges for conserving wildlife today. This is particularly true in the U.S. Rockies, as more people, appreciative of the region’s abundant wildlife and big, open landscapes, move to the region. The resulting increase in highway traffic is taking its toll on wildlife trying to cross these busy roadways. Our wildlife movement corridors are increasingly threatened by our “transportation corridors.”

Clearly, the intersection between human transportation corridors and wildlife movement corridors is a problem for both people and wildlife. American Wildlands works with state transportation departments, state wildlife agencies and others to increase both the number of structures for wildlife to cross highways, and the amount of roadside

information to help motorists avoid collisions with wildlife. This can be as simple as providing motorists with highway warning signs and animal-on-road detection signs. It can also include the more involved retrofitting of existing road structures (culverts, railroad underpasses, etc.) to serve as safe passage structures, or the construction of new overpasses and underpasses specifically for wildlife.

American Wildlands is striving to make the Northern Rockies a national showcase for “on the ground” projects that demonstrate how highways can be designed or retrofitted to meet the safe passage needs of wide-ranging wildlife—thus making highways safer for wildlife and people alike.

### Major Accomplishments for FY 2008

**D**uring FY 2008, American Wildlands initiated new Safe Passages projects to [1] collect and disseminate the best available science; [2] inform and influence agency planning and policies; [3] form and/or facilitate partnerships and local working groups; and [4] inform and engage the public. Important accomplishments in these areas include:

**Science:** Given that Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has a 20 year planning cycle, we have been working with MDT and the state wildlife agency to initiate a comprehensive identification of the wildlife/highway problem areas in Montana. This assessment will improve MDT’s long-term

highway planning process, as well as the agency’s ability to secure increased federal highway dollars for wildlife safe passage measures. Meanwhile, since this comprehensive assessment will take more than a year to complete, in 2008 AWL conducted our own “rapid assessment” of highway conflict areas, data that can be used by MDT in the interim to inform

*One of the six different billboard designs to be used in 2009.*



their efforts to make our highways safer for both people and wildlife.

**Informing and Influencing Planning and Policies:** In addition to using the above-mentioned assessments to influence state highway planning, and the transportation recommendations of the Western Governors Association's Wildlife Corridors Initiative (see page 4), American Wildlands continued producing our Safe Passages E-Bulletin for safe passages practitioners across the region and country. This on-line publication serves as a resource for agency field staff, highlighting the latest applied science and best management practices for wildlife safe passages across highways.

**Partnerships and Local Working Groups:** AWL continued working with local partnerships focused on Interstate 90 at Bozeman Pass, Montana Highway 2 at the southern border of Glacier National Park, and the Ninemile area northwest of Missoula, Montana. For instance, on Highway 2, we worked with the Great Northern Environmental Stewardship Area group and two University of Montana graduate students to conduct a wildlife trails survey to determine where wildlife are crossing the highway and adjacent railroad. Another great success was partnering with MDT, other conservation NGOs, and private land owners to raise the final \$27,600 needed for the construction of a new wildlife/cattle underpass on Highway 206 east of Kalispell, Montana.

**Public Education and Outreach:** No effort better represents AWL's commitment to informing local citizens about, and engaging them in promoting, the benefits of wildlife safe passages than our Children's Art Contest last winter. AWL invited students in grades K-8 from schools throughout our local Park and Gallatin counties to participate in an art contest illustrating safer passages for people and wildlife. We had 265 students from 26 classrooms in 18 schools participate, and rewarded them all with a public celebration of their work, where MDT Director Jim Lynch handed out awards to the top 20 winners. Artwork from the top six winners will be



*American Wildlands' "Safe Passages E-Bulletin" serves as a resource for safe passages practitioners across the region and country.*

displayed on informative safe passages billboards to be placed in Park and Gallatin counties during the first six months of 2009.

## 2009 and Beyond

Stay tuned for more of the same, as American Wildlands continues these important science, policy, and public outreach efforts. We look forward to [1] making the most of the new Western Governors Association's recommendations regarding transportation and wildlife corridors; [2] working with the national "TransWild Alliance" to influence the upcoming re-authorization of the federal highway bill; [3] helping the state of Montana conduct a comprehensive assessment of wildlife/highway conflict areas and mitigation plans; [4] continuing our partnerships with local groups on Bozeman Pass, Highway 2, and the Ninemile area; and [5] taking advantage of new timely opportunities that arise.



## Strengthening the Conservation Community's Ability to Advocate



*I am writing to thank American Wildlands for your exceptional help and support in preparing detailed GIS maps for five proposed Important Bird Areas across Montana for the Greater Sage-Grouse and other sagebrush-dependent species. GIS Lab Manager Sarah Olimb was incredibly responsive to our needs throughout the process; she went far beyond the call of duty in response to our somewhat urgent request. We especially appreciate your organization's willingness to offer this service free of charge. We did not have adequate funding, so your generous offer to donate this service was extremely helpful. Keep up the great work you are doing."*

*~ Steve Hoffman, Executive Director, Montana Audubon*

**T**he ability for a conservation organization to make a strong and convincing case for their "cause" is at the heart of that group's success. Strong science makes for a convincing story, but the story must be conveyed in a way that captures the attention of the public and decision-makers alike. As has been said before, a picture tells a thousand words. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology melds the need for strong science and a compelling story.

Unfortunately, the costs of commercial GIS services, or establishing one's own GIS lab, are prohibitive for most groups. Furthermore, because most conservation organizations (particularly smaller ones) are either unaware of the benefits of GIS technology, or only use GIS on an intermittent basis, they do not include GIS work in their annual/program budgets.

AWL's *Community GIS Services* program provides this valuable technical service at a cost every organization can afford—at discounted or pro-bono rates. Our staff's combined experience in GIS modeling and conservation policy means we are able to create GIS products that are not only strategically conceived and scientifically defensible, but are visually compelling as well. And our GIS Apprentice program provides on-the-job

training and experience for the next generation of conservationists.

GIS technology has been an integral part of American Wildlands' conservation work for the past twelve years. Our GIS technology has greatly enhanced our program and communications work, including improving the efficiency of program strategizing, influencing agency planning, and effectively communicating with our members and the public. Having gained a deep appreciation for the power of GIS, and having begun to receive requests for our services from other organizations, American Wildlands established our *Community GIS Services* program in 2001 in order to share this influential resource with other conservation groups in the region.

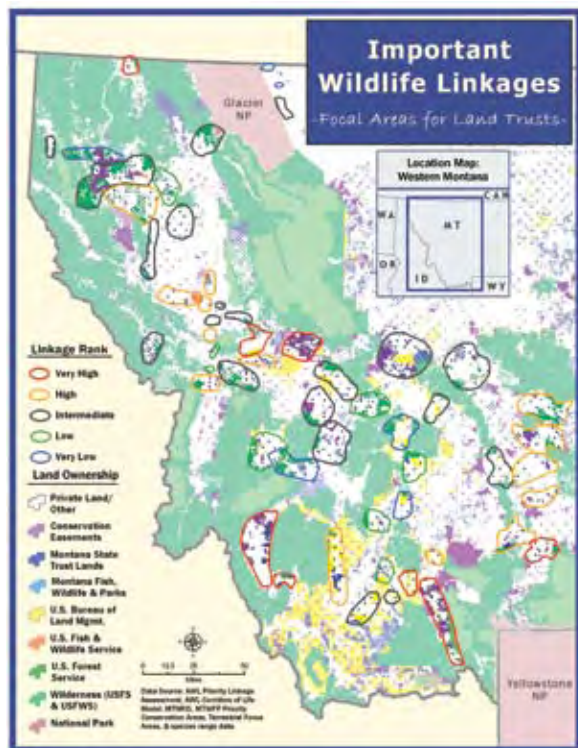
### Major Accomplishments in FY 2008

**T**his past year, the suite of *Community GIS Services* projects American Wildlands engaged in was more diverse than in years past. The following is a sampling of those projects:

▼ **World Wildlife Fund:** We worked with the Northern Great Plains office of World Wildlife Fund to develop a vegetation computer model to predict how global warming (and the resulting change in wildfire patterns) would influence



wildlife habitat in the Northern Great Plains region. WWF is now using the results of this GIS model to help plan and prioritize future conservation projects in the region.



▼ **Defenders of Wildlife:** In this analysis, contracted by Defenders of Wildlife's Living Lands Program, we adapted the results of our Priority Linkage Assessment for local land trusts to help them determine where and when to focus their efforts in Western Montana. [See map to left.] The prioritization of wildlife linkages on private lands will assist land trusts in practicing both efficient and effective conservation.

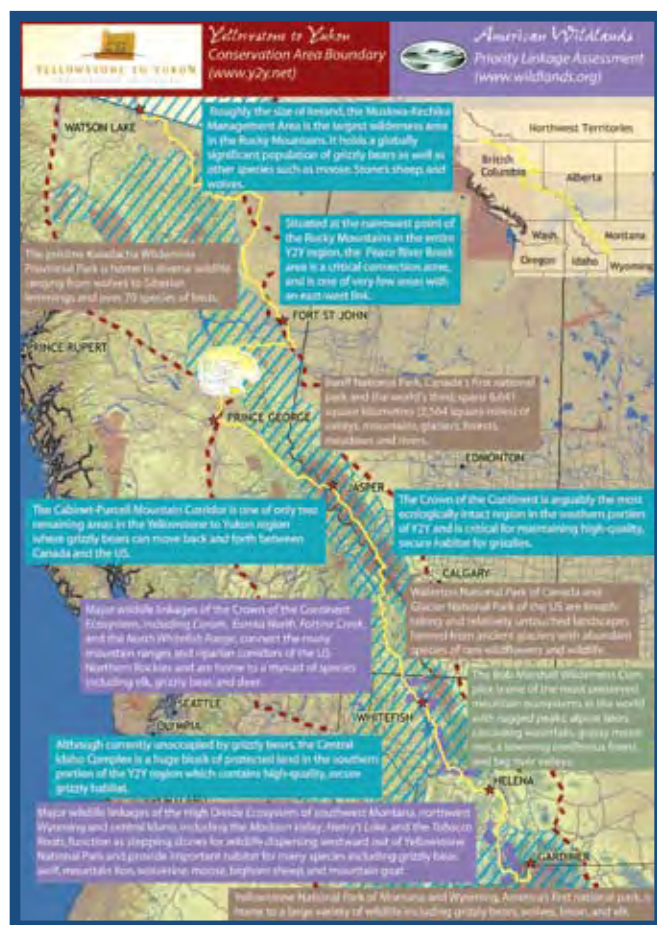
▼ **Greater Yellowstone Coalition:** American Wildlands developed a map that highlights where wolf packs live in Grand Teton National Park for some or part of the year. This map accompanies a new "Wolves in Grand Teton and Jackson Hole" guide, which was produced jointly by conservation groups in the region and the National Park Service, and is being sold at stores in and around the park.

▼ **Ride for the Wild** (a six week bicycle ride

inspired by the Patagonia company's *Freedom to Roam* program): As a co-sponsor of the Ride for the Wild, American Wildlands created a map (at right) that identified and described important conservation areas located along the bike route from the Yukon's Watson Lake to Gardiner, Montana (at the northern edge of Yellowstone National Park). The map was placed on both the Ride for the Wild and Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative's websites, and allowed readers to follow the path of the bike team and learn about the many magnificent landscapes and critical wildlife habitats along the route.

## 2009 and Beyond

In addition to the GIS Lab supporting our own *Corridors of Life* and *Safe Passages* conservation programs, we will continue providing low-cost GIS services to others in the region's conservation community. To help leverage our own programs, in 2009 American Wildlands will focus on those community GIS projects that complement and advance our own efforts to conserve wildlife movement corridors and habitat connections on public lands, private lands, and across highways and railroads of the U.S. Northern Rockies.



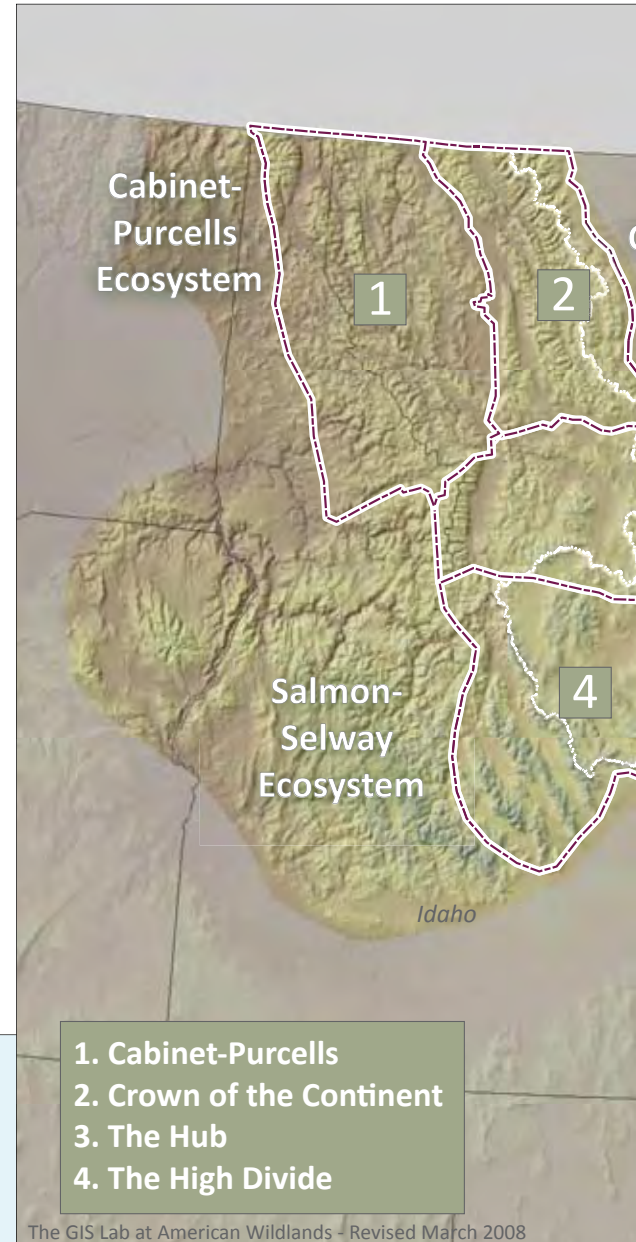
# AMERICAN W

American Wildlands focuses on linking core habitats for wildlife across  
We understand that conserving the integrity of the region's land

## CABINET-PURCELLS ECOSYSTEM

"Thank you so much for all the financial assistance American Wildlands has given the Ninemile Wildlife Movement Area Workgroup for almost two years now—everything from the incredibly valuable start-up monthly budget to helping fund our first newsletter. We do seem to be on our way now, and the Ninemile workgroup will remain a pro-wildlife force for many years. We have appreciated Kim's presence in the workgroup very much. Thank you for enabling her to share her time and energy with us in maintaining a relationship between NWW and American Wildlands that greatly benefited our "new kid on the block" status. There's still so much that remains to be done to protect wildlife movement both in the Ninemile and regionally. Let's continue working together toward accomplishing the missions of both organizations."

~ Eleanor Danesh, Ninemile Wildlife Movement Area Workgroup Coordinator



The GIS Lab at American Wildlands - Revised March 2008

## HIGH DIVIDE

"The Dillon Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management has utilized wildlife connectivity "linkage" information from American Wildlands in the Dillon Resource Management Plan. Located in the "High Divide" area, the Dillon Field Office manages nearly 1 million acres of Public Land which is occupied by most big game species and carnivores. These Public Lands provide important connectivity between

larger contiguous blocks of public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service. The information obtained from American Wildlands was important in developing direction to reduce conflicts between wildlife and land use authorizations and activities within these important linkage areas."

~ Tim Bozorth, Field Manager, Dillon Field Office, Bureau of Land Management

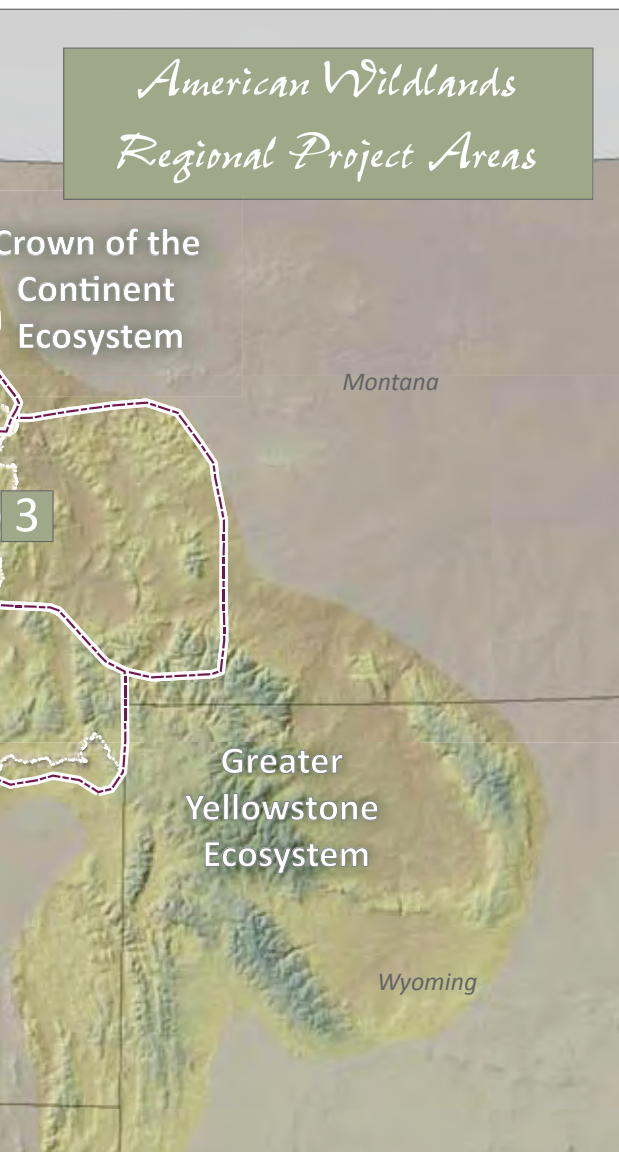


AWL's Jim Roscoe discusses habitat connectivity opportunities in the High Divide with a Bureau of Land Management representative and a local ranch owner.



# WILD LANDS' PROJECT MAP

a wide range of landscapes throughout Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.  
Landscape and wildlife depends on engagement at the local level.



## CROWN OF THE CONTINENT

Over the past several years, I have had the unique and gratifying opportunity to work with American Wildlands and various members of their talented staff. I worked with Kim Davitt to secure the remaining \$27,600 needed for construction of a livestock/wildlife underpass on Highway 206.

Photo by Pat Basting.



American Wildlands helped the Montana Department of Transportation secure funding to build this highway underpass for wildlife and cattle.

AWL helped make this project a reality by not only contributing funding, but also by assisting in finding other partners to help fund this worthwhile effort. I've also had the pleasure of working with April Johnston on

the transportation subcommittee of the Western Governors Association's Crucial Habitats and Wildlife Corridors Initiative. Thank you all for your continued conservation ethic, professionalism, creativity, and willingness to form productive collaborative working relationships.

~ Pat Basting, District Biologist,  
Montana Department of Transportation

## THE HUB

I must take this opportunity to thank the staff of American Wildlands for the indispensable role you have played in raising awareness about the critical role the Continental Divide plays as a wildlife linkage zone in the vicinity of Helena. As a wildlife biologist with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, I relied upon constituent support to do my job to represent wildlife in my area of the state. Recognizing that there has been limited public awareness of the importance that the MacDonald Pass area serves as a wildlife linkage zone, I contacted American Wildlands searching for support, public organizing skills, and wildlife movement zone mapping abilities. American Wildlands has superbly provided all three of these.

~ Gayle Joslin, former state wildlife biologist and  
member of the Continental Divide Working Group



Photo by Betsy Robinson, Wild Things Unlimited.

Wildlife biologist Steve Gehman finds lynx tracks in the MacDonald Pass area as part of an American Wildlands-funded wildlife survey project.

## Celebrating 30 Years of Keeping



This year, American Wildlands celebrated thirty years of conservation programs and accomplishments with a mid-July week of public events in Bozeman, including a reunion for AWL staff and Board members, and a private fundraiser at Ted Turner's Flying D Ranch. This was a great occasion for AWL to reflect on three decades of conservation successes, ranging from designating new wilderness areas to conserving age-old wildlife corridors. It also served as a great opportunity to map out our future connections to such issues as forest management and energy development on public lands, subdivision of private lands, coexisting with wildlife, and climate change.

We started the week focused on wildlife. Three of the region's preeminent wildlife biologists—Lance Craighead, John Squires, and Steve Gehman—discussed the natural history of grizzly bears, lynx and wolverine. Audience members ranged from wildlife enthusiasts who wanted to learn more about these charismatic animals, to students and conservationists who wanted to hear about the latest science and conservation strategies for these species.

On Wednesday evening, economist Ray Rasker discussed the relationship between a healthy natural environment and a higher quality of living for neighboring communities, showing how both of those assets lead to economic prosperity for many mountain communities. Two local small business owners—Chris Naumann of the Downtown Bozeman Partnership and AWL Board member Justin Bigart—then shared their stories about why and how they support conservation efforts and organizations because of the benefit it brings to their businesses.

Thursday's presentation harkened back to AWL's roots, when environmental historian Rod Nash discussed wilderness as a place and an environmental and cultural need. Professor Nash's history of wilderness started with the origin of the word (wil-deor-ness: self-willed land), progressed through wilderness champions Teddy Roosevelt and John Muir, and concluded with the importance of wilderness as a refuge from development for wildlife and people alike.

The main event was Friday's International Habitat Connectivity Symposium, which highlighted wildlife corridor projects in the Yellowstone to Yukon region of the United States and Canada, Kenya, the Himalaya, eastern Australia and western Europe.

Harvey Locke, co-founder of the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, used the Y2Y project and landscape to introduce the concept of island biogeography and habitat fragmentation, and the need for maintaining habitat connections and wildlife corridors. Harvey gave kudos to American Wildlands for thinking about these ideas "early on, and starting the Corridors of Life program... so this kind of leading edge thinking is no stranger to the organization that is hosting us here today."

PHOTOS ON LEFT: Tom Skeelee, Sally Ranney (AWL Co-Founder), and Ted Turner; Tom Page (Page Foundation) and Rod Nash (Environmental Historian); Business Panel with Ray Rasker (Headwaters Economics), Chris Naumann (Downtown Bozeman Partnership), and Justin Bigart (Sage Spa); Harvey Locke (Yellowstone To Yukon Conservation Initiative); Seth Wilson (AWL Board Member), and Dan Heinz (past AWL Staff); Sarah Olimb (AWL) and Graeme Worboys (Australia National Parks); Turner Ranch Tour begins.



## Connected to Wildlife and Wildlands

We next heard from Jon Miceler of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), who discussed the Sacred Himalayan Landscape project along the common border of Tibet, India, Bhutan, Nepal and Burma. Jon emphasized the importance of working with the locals, stating, “This takes years to do, largely to get the trust of people so they understand that we are not trying to put the welfare of animals above people. Once you have their trust, more than half of your battle is won.”

Miquel Rafa, from Spain, outlined the Great Mountain Corridor project, an effort to re-establish the ecological linkages between four western European mountain ranges: the Cantabrian, Pyrenees, Massif Central and Alps. Miquel highlighted the need for both vision and practicality, as he explained how renewed habitat connections had led to wolves being re-established amidst this very developed landscape.

Iain Douglas-Hamilton presented his “Streaking for Survival” story about how Save the Elephants is working with Google and Google Earth to further develop a “live” tracking technology that uses GPS collars and mobile phone technology to monitor elephant movements in places where intensive study is impossible.

Finally, Graeme Worboys, a 30-year veteran of the Australian National Parks, presented the new “Alps to Atherton” wildlife corridor spanning the entirety of eastern Australia, which will allow plants and animals to adapt to changes in the environment as the continent’s climate changes. Graeme showed a sobering set of slides that depicted future habitat shifts, based on GIS modeling, in the rainforest of northeast Australia. Of the 65 vertebrate species native to this rainforest, one species would be lost to a 1° decrease in temperature, 30 species would be lost to a 3° decrease in temperature, and 57 species would disappear with a 5° decrease in temperature. He discussed the importance of maintaining wildlife corridors in the race to help resident species adapt to climate change.

Rick Ridgeway, adventurer, author, and current head of Patagonia’s Environmental Program, closed the symposium by introducing Patagonia’s *Freedom to Roam* campaign. “As business men and women,” Rick explained, “we asked ourselves ‘What could we do to add value to this effort?’ We came up with the concept of trying to create a brand for landscape connectivity that could be popularized until nearly everyone in the United States and Canada understood the idea, and why it is so important.” That is the auspicious goal of *Freedom to Roam*, one American Wildlands supports whole-heartedly.

On Saturday, we closed our week-long celebration with an AWL reunion in the morning, and a private dinner and tour at Ted Turner’s Flying D Ranch. It was great to see staff and Board members from as far back as the early 1980s and as far away as Nevada, and we are grateful to the 70 people who attended the fundraising event. All in all, the week was a great success, and we look forward to having more public celebrations of this kind in the years to come.

*PHOTOS ON RIGHT: Jon Miceler (WWF–Himalayas); Marilyn Cowgill (AWL Board President) & Emily Loose (Wild Foundation); Dinner at the Ranch; Iain Douglas Hamilton (Save the Elephants) and David Quammen (Science and Nature Writer); Don Weeden (Weeden Foundation), Graeme Worboys, Iain Douglas Hamilton, Harvey Locke, and Miquel Rafa (Fundacio Territori i Paisatge, Spain) visit Yellowstone Natl. Park; Rick Ridgeway (Patagonia Inc.); Chris Bunting (former AWL Board) and Miquel Rafa.*



## Business Support



This year, American Wildlands has been delighted to continue making great connections with businesses, both with those companies we have worked with in the past, as well as new relationships which brought us increased support and exposure. We expanded our partnerships with corporations through event sponsorships, cross promotional opportunities, and business memberships.

St. Patrick's Day marked the start of our new *Connecting Ecology and Economy* series. Together with D.A. Davidson, Calvert Funds and the Bozeman-based Montana Ale Works, we provided a free, social presentation to local residents about the importance and benefits of community investing, and how a healthy local economy supports a healthy ecology.

In May, American Wildlands partnered with the West Yellowstone-based *Blue Ribbons Flies* for a very successful new member drive. We encouraged anglers from across the country to join American Wildlands with the lure of possibly winning a guided fishing trip donated by Blue



Ribbons Flies. This collaboration resulted in 75 new members, and introduced American Wildlands to a significantly wider audience. Thank you, Blue Ribbons Flies!

Next came summer, a time for sandals. That is why we were thrilled to be chosen as the beneficiary of a great cross-promotional partnership with the Bozeman-based Northern Lights Trading Company and outdoor footwear company Keen. Northern Lights was selling the Keen H2 sandal at a discount and donating \$20 per pair sold to American Wildlands. Keen matched that contribution, making it a \$40 donation to AWL for each pair of sandals sold! American Wildlands received a grand total of \$2,400 through this event. Thanks, Keen and Northern Lights!



This fall, we were honored to be chosen by Patagonia, Inc. as one of 12 conservation groups to be highlighted in the company's 2009 calendar—giving American Wildlands even more national exposure. These colorful and captivating calendars, with Patagonia's typically amazing photography, are available for \$12 in-store or online ([www.patagonia.com](http://www.patagonia.com) under "Clothing & Gear/Extras/Stuff"). Order yours today, and check us out on the April page!

American Wildlands is grateful to these and all the other businesses that supported our work during 2008. Please see page 16 for the complete list of businesses that supported American Wildlands through event sponsorships, cross promotional opportunities, and business memberships. More importantly, please return the favor by supporting these businesses, and tell them thanks for helping American Wildlands keep the U.S. Northern Rockies ecologically connected for the region's magnificent wildlife. You can learn more about our Corporate Connections, and how your business can get involved, on our website: [www.wildlands.org/support/business](http://www.wildlands.org/support/business).



## Member Efforts

**W**here would American Wildlands be without our members? Not as far along as we are in our mission of keeping the U.S. Northern Rockies ecologically connected—that's for sure! Our members provide not only financial and political support, but also provide us with the community resources we need. Each year, many people provide that community support in a myriad of ways: hosting a “meet and greet” to introduce more people to AWL, helping staff our public events like the 30th Anniversary Symposium and Patagonia Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival, and volunteering to help with day-to-day operations in our three offices.

**Florida Connections:** Last January, AWL staffers April Johnston and Faye Kommers gave public and private presentations about our programs to existing and prospective members in southern Florida. We greatly appreciate the help of AWL members Andrea and Bruce Tyson and Patti Sime in hosting April and Faye in Naples and Hobe Sound.



*AWL Executive Director Tom Skeele and Dillon Field Office Director Jim Roscoe in front of the new Dillon Office.*

**Open House at the Dillon Office:** In April, American Wildlands hosted an “open house” at our field office in Dillon, Montana to announce our presence in, and commitment to, the High Divide region. Probably the most common comments we heard from the two dozen people who came to learn more about American Wildlands was that

they were pleased AWL cares enough about their corner of the region to open an office and devote a full time person to conserving its big, open landscapes and abundant wildlife. It was a warm reception that provided AWL staffer Jim Roscoe with a solid foundation of emotional support in this small, rural community.

**Maryland Connections:** In June, AWL members Mrs. Joseph Sener and Betsy Sener Durham kindly hosted a “meet and greet” event where Executive Director Tom Skeele spoke to 30 residents of Maryland’s Eastern Shore. A common concern for providing wildlife with safe passages across highways was strong amidst this group, and all greatly appreciated seeing the landscapes and wild animals of a region some 2,000 miles away. American Wildlands made a number of new contacts there that continue to benefit the organization.

**Volunteer Photo Librarian:** Ask and you shall receive! That was the outcome of a serendipitous conversation Tom Skeele had with local member Missy Mayfield, when he mentioned that AWL needed someone to help manage our photographic library. Turns out Missy has years of experience as a photo archivist, and was gracious enough to offer to help American Wildlands upgrade ours. Missy spent the better part of 2008 working on our photo library, and we can’t thank her enough for volunteering her time and professional skills to American Wildlands.

**A Cast of Dozens:** Finally, American Wildlands wishes to thank each of the Montana-based volunteers who helped us with our public events and program work during Fiscal Year 2008.

Cacky Bell ▼ Britta Benson ▼ Jesse England ▼ Krista Finnicum ▼ Blake Harrigan ▼ Linda Heisler-Clancy ▼ Mark Johnston ▼ Gayle Joslin ▼ Stephanie Karp ▼ Amy Kellogg ▼ Amy Kelley ▼ Dianne Kommers ▼ Bethany Olimb ▼ Carl Olimb ▼ John Mallard ▼ Missy Mayfield ▼ Collin McWilliams ▼ Shaleen Miles ▼ Ray Minkler ▼ Sylvia Murcia ▼ Wyatt Nelson ▼ Scott Newman ▼ Ben Nobel ▼ Kylie Paul ▼ Joe Quincy ▼ Margaret Regan ▼ Joy Ritter ▼ Molly Robbins ▼ Dr. Julia Sable ▼ Annie Sisk ▼ Koki Sudo ▼ Ken Wallace ▼ Jill Wilkinson

## October 1, 2007 — September 30, 2008

### Tributes: In Honor of

Camden J. Lindsey-Gardner and Russell G. Gardner, from John H. Williams ▼ Christopher and Rebekah Bunting, from Anne R. Bunting ▼ Colleen Helm, from Karin Carestia ▼ Curtis Olimb, from Sarah and Carl Olimb ▼ Ixtla Vaughan, from Tim and Alice Vaughan ▼ Katherine Jones, from Eric and Suzanne Nielsen ▼ Miriam and Ralph Ritter, from Joy Ritter

### Tributes: In Memory of

Barbara Farquhar, from Blumberg Rich Joste

### Foundations and Grants

Brainerd Foundation ▼ Bunting Family Foundation—Fund B ▼ Chase Wildlife Foundation ▼ Earth Friends Wildlife Foundation ▼ Edith W. McGuire Charitable Trust ▼ Heinz Family Foundation ▼ Henry E. Niles Foundation ▼ Horne Family Foundation ▼ John P. McBride Family and the ABC Foundation ▼ La Salle Adams Fund ▼ Laura J. Niles Foundation ▼ Leonard X. Bosack and Bette M. Kruger Charitable Foundation ▼ Maki Foundation ▼ Merrill G. & Erita E. Hastings Foundation ▼ Myers-Ball Foundation, Inc. ▼ New-Land Foundation ▼ Norcross Wildlife Foundation ▼ On Shore Foundation ▼ Page Foundation ▼ Sener-Johnston Family Fund ▼ Steele-Reese Foundation ▼ The Biophilia Foundation ▼ The Bullitt Foundation ▼ The Cinnabar Foundation ▼ The Fanwood Foundation/West ▼ The Kainz Family Foundation ▼ The Weeden Foundation ▼ Turner Foundation ▼ Wilburforce Foundation ▼ Wildlife Land Trust ▼ Winslow Foundation

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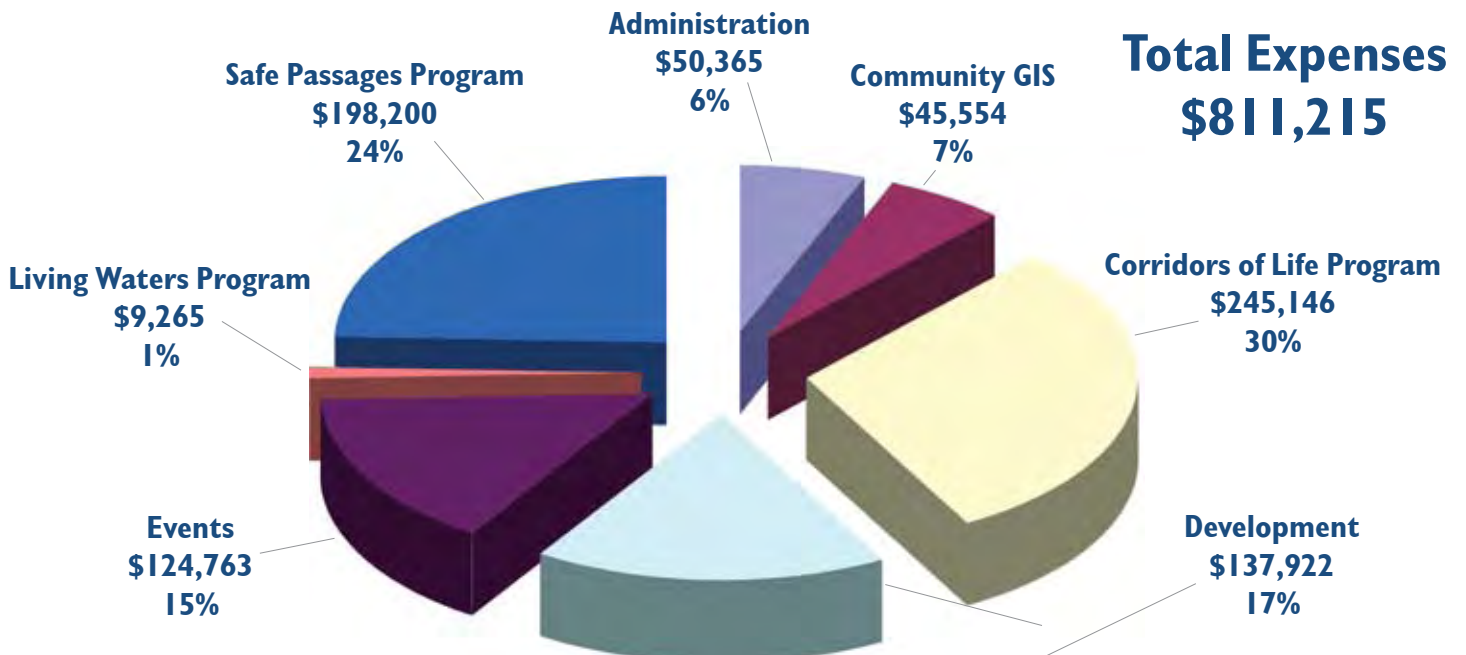
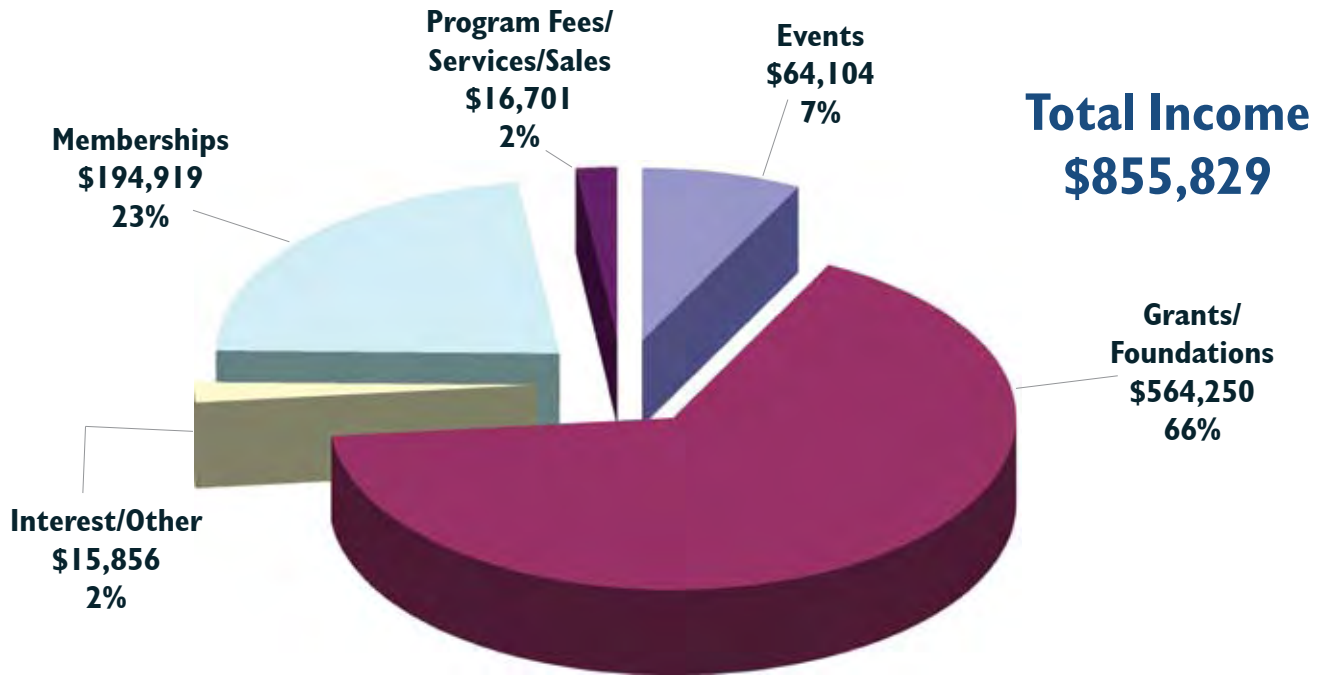
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## Fiscal Year 2008 Financials (10/1/07 - 9/30/08)

NOTE: These charts were generated before completion of our end-of-year adjustments and audit.  
The charts also include income and expenses from our 30th events held this past July.





## ..... American Wildlands' Staff .....



(left) Julie Betsch, GIS Apprentice; Kim Davitt, Corridors of Life North Program Coordinator; Jessica Hann, Safe Passages Associate; Grace Hammond, GIS Intern; April Johnston, Conservation Director



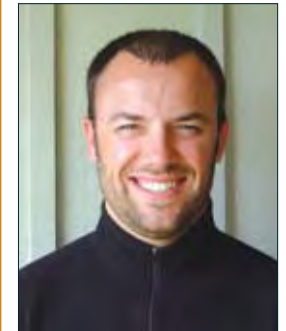
(left) Lisa Bean King, Membership and Events Coordinator; Lisa Lenard, Development Director; Melinda Monroe, Finance Manager; Sarah Olimb, GIS Lab Manager

(above) Jim Roscoe, Dillon Field Office Director; Tom Skeele, Executive Director; Catherine Viscardi, Director of Office Operations; Elizabeth Williamson, Safe Passages Program Coordinator

## ..... American Wildlands' Board of Directors .....



(left) Justin Bigart; Jackie Corday; Marilyn Cowgill, PhD; Doug Sobey; (below) Bill Stoddart; Ryan Wilson; Seth Wilson, PhD.





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