



NORTHERN ROCKIES
CONSERVATION
COOPERATIVE

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



Conservation for the Common Good

— Since 1987 —

DEAR FRIENDS,



Finding ways to work across boundaries presents many challenges. As Robert Keiter notes in this issue, the GYE is a complex place with wild landscapes and human communities existing in a web of parcels with conflicting mandates. Consequently, people often work at cross purposes. The difficulty of sustaining long-distance elk, deer, and pronghorn migrations illustrates this fact. This issue is coming to the forefront for the public and agencies. Many of us agree that we must find ways to transcend boundaries causing problems for us and wildlife. NRCC has written extensively and worked tirelessly about what to do and why, as demonstrated in *Yellowstone’s Survival: A Call to Action for a New Conservation Story* by Susan Clark.

The “ecosystem” concept has been a guiding principle for our time and place. In many arenas, we’ve seen a rise in a new kind of thinking that is geographically and institutionally more encompassing than was previously employed. Boundary-spanning initiatives have taken the form of watershed management, forest fire preparation, and responses to global climate change. These examples illustrate efforts to move beyond parochial boundaries and act on geographic and institutional scales large enough to bring about needed change.

At NRCC, we think a grander strategy could help us all get on the same page – to “preserve and protect the area’s ecosystem to ensure a healthy environment, community, and economy for current and future generations,” as stated in the Teton County Comprehensive Plan. We explored the elements of a transboundary strategy at NRCC’s Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium in October. The sessions, panels, and research talks focused on coexistence as a goal and strategy as a method to work

together. We sought to enhance community dialogue and develop a roadmap for coordinated collective action. We asked whether we are becoming more attentive and ethical to wildlife and each other. Are our different conservation efforts adding up for people and animals? Are we pulling the right levers? Are we seeing the whole picture? Are we working fast enough?

NRCC’s goals are ecological health, but ecology alone won’t get us where we need to be. We want people to lead healthy lives and for a political system to support that goal. We must think beyond our roles, broaden our scope, and see conservation as an approach that seeks better relations between humans and wildlife, humans and all of nature, and humans and other humans. We must remain open enough and imaginative enough to think beyond existing boundaries. As Michael Whitfield said at the symposium, “Single-purpose thinking is a barrier to big-picture conservation.”

Please read on to learn more about this year’s symposium and other NRCC achievements. This work is impossible without the support and encouragement of readers like yourself. Thank you for being here, and please continue to stay engaged with NRCC’s work in 2024.

Sincerely,

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Susan Clark

Peyton

Peyton Curlee Griffin

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Ben Williamson

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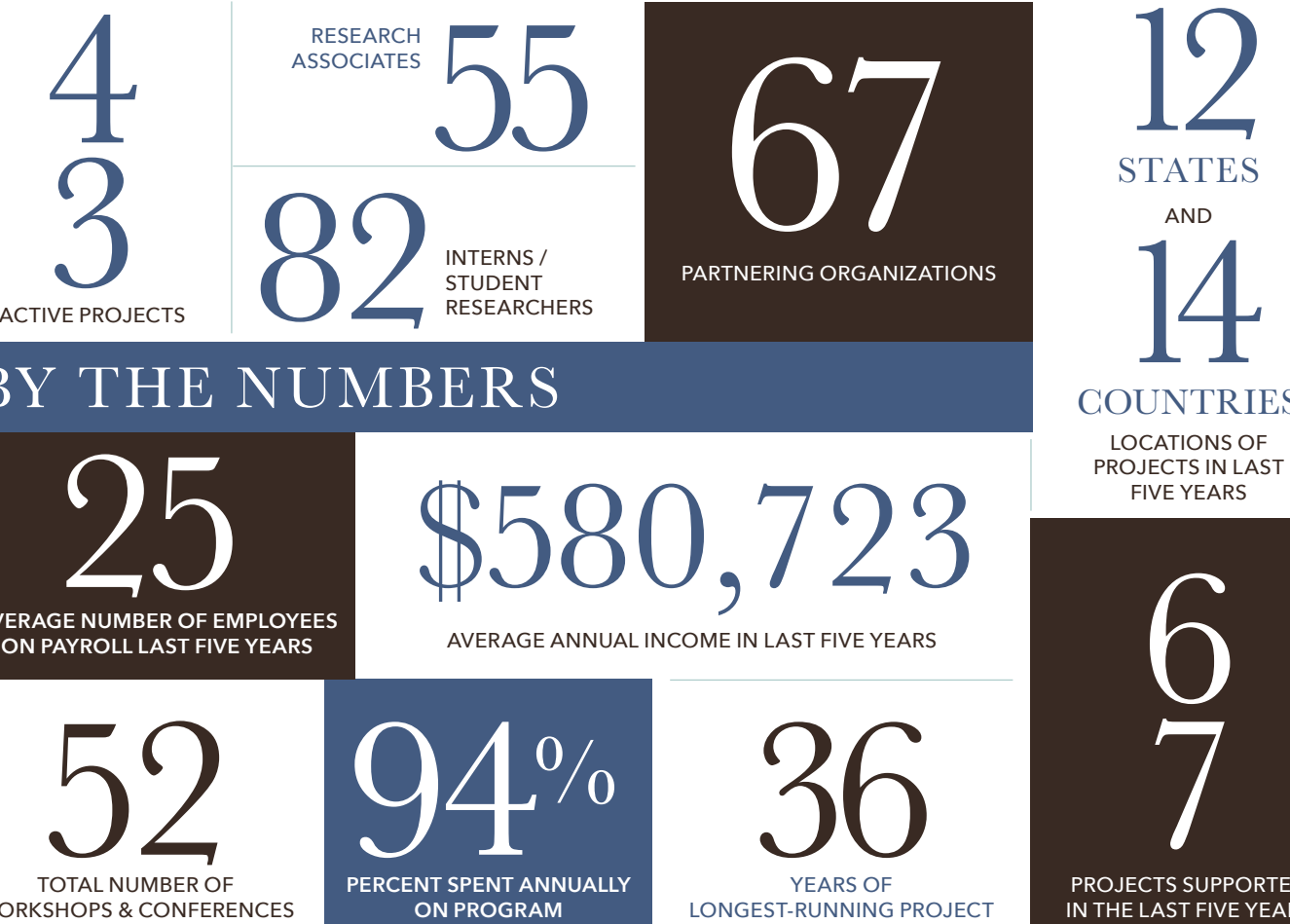
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NRCC Welcomes New Resident Fellow and Interns

NRCC is pleased to welcome Ana Elisa Lambert as the first Resident Fellow, a new program to support the work of an emerging environmental leader or scholar. NRCC also hosted two interns this year. Pippa Barratt and Emma Blakslee helped organize the Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium. Thank you to them both for their valuable contributions.



ANA ELISA LAMBERT | Resident Fellow

Ana Elisa Lambert is NRCC’s first Resident Fellow and a doctoral student at the University of Manchester (UK), studying how global organizations frame and represent human aspects of environmental change, using the Amazon basin as the focus. In 2023, she worked with NRCC to better understand how different stakeholders represent the GYE, and as a result, shape individual and institutional actions. She also collaborated on core NRCC projects. Ana was raised in Mexico, where she studied Environmental Engineering at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO). She then pursued a Master of Environmental Management at the Yale School of the Environment, focusing on international and large-scale conservation. After graduating in 2017, she worked in Latin America, U.S., Africa, and Australia, spanning social science, engineering, and wildlife conservation.



PIPPA BARRATT | Intern

Pippa Barratt was NRCC’s spring 2023 AmeriCorps service member through the Teton Science Schools. Pippa kicked off planning for the 2023 Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium, organized the Human-Wildlife Coexistence Photography Contest, and updated NRCC’s social media platforms. Pippa is a recent graduate from Temple University with a Bachelor’s in Environmental Studies. During her time in Jackson, Pippa enjoyed hiking the trails and getting to know Grand Teton National Park.

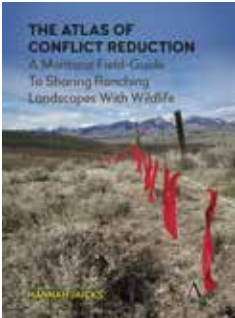


EMMA BLAKSLEE | Intern

Emma was a Fall Americorps service member and helped prepare and pull off the 2023 Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium. Growing up in Edwards, CO, Emma has been passionate about the outdoors and ecology for as long as she can remember. She attended Bates College in Maine, where she conducted research on freshwater algae and enjoyed exploring the rocky coastline. She graduated in May 2023 with a B.S. in Biology and a minor in Anthropology. In her free time, she can be found nordic skiing, crafting, cooking, and trail running.

The Atlas of Conflict: A Montana Field Guide to Sharing Ranching Landscapes with Wildlife

By Hannah (Jaicks) Ollenburger, NRCC Research Associate



The Atlas of Conflict Reduction takes readers on a journey through western Montana to a different valley in each chapter. It showcases the place-based stories of everyday conservation heroes and the collaborative strategies they are pioneering to reduce conflicts with wildlife. These cases show how working ranches can be maintained and landscapes stewarded that would otherwise be developed, subjected to recreation pressures, and and/or subdivided beyond repair. With each chapter, Dr. Hannah (Jaicks) Ollenburger introduces the reader to a different ranching community and couples their stories with broader themes and ideas from disciplines like environmental psychology, human geography, and environmental history. She illustrates the issues ranchers face in attempting to maintain their livelihoods among wildlife populations, but also the opportunities ranchers take advantage of to overcome obstacles. Ranchers have the power to shape the future of our lands, waterways, and

wildlife communities, but enduring perceptions frame ranching as an unilaterally destructive force to the environment. The reality is far more complicated. This book elevates the voices of people who are challenging common (mis)perceptions by striving daily to achieve wild and working landscapes in the West, and it serves as a model for how others can begin to do the same. In sharing first-hand accounts from ranchers and the organizational leaders of partner groups who work with them, the author weaves together the particulars of local geographies with rich human stories to inform readers about progressive ways to make the world we share—with people and animals—a better place to live. Illustrations by Katie Shepherd Christiansen (Coyote Art & Ecology) of wildlife and conflict-reduction tools accompany the text, helping to underscore the vivid realities of shared landscapes and how they are achieved.



Lifetime Achievement Award and Tribute to Ruth Shea: 1952-2023

By Susan Patla, NRCC Research Associate with input from Gary Ivey, The Trumpeter Swan Society

The Trumpeter Swan, North America’s only native swan species, lost one of its most ardent and energetic champions with the passing of Ruth Shea on February 25, 2023. Known by many as the “Swan Lady,” Ruth completed her master’s thesis, “The Ecology of Trumpeter Swan in Yellowstone National Park and Vicinity,” in 1979 at the University of Montana. This was only the first step in her life-long work dedicated to the study and conservation of trumpeters in the Greater Yellowstone region and beyond. Working as a scientist, historian, and conservationist, she inspired and taught many over the last 40 years.

In 1979, Ruth attended her first meeting of The Trumpeter Swan Society (TTSS) and began a decades-long association with this nonprofit as a board member, board president and its first Executive Director. Through TTSS, Ruth met and worked with swan biologists and advocates throughout the region, country, and world. Throughout her career, Ruth also worked for several different agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. She also served as an Affiliate Faculty for the Department of Biological Sciences at Idaho State University.

Ruth’s work on swan conservation issues ranged widely, including fieldwork, long library investigations, and many public presentations. In the 1990s, she and her late husband, Rod Drewien, were leading players in major efforts to expand the limited wintering distribution of trumpeters to the south and east of the Henry’s Fork of the Snake River. This required capturing swans by airboat in sub-zero conditions and arranging translocations of hundreds of trumpeters. Over time, it proved very successful, as significant numbers of trumpeters now winter across southern Idaho, Oregon, and Utah.

Ruth was a long-time member of NRCC’s Board of Advisors before becoming a Research Associate in 2015 and starting the Northern Rockies Trumpeter Swan Stewards (NRTSS) to help keep regional nesting populations secure. With the NRTSS, Ruth wanted to provide the upcoming generation of swan stewards with greater knowledge of swan ecology and the tools to conserve and improve swan habitat.

She believed strongly that the continued restoration of trumpeters in the Greater Yellowstone area and in the western states would depend on long-lasting, private-public partnerships.

Although the Trumpeter Swan as a species is now considered secure in North America, a real conservation success story, the regional population, she understood, remains vulnerable.

Ruth’s last major accomplishment came in October 2023, when Princeton University Press published, “*Yellowstone Birds: Diversity and Abundance in the World’s First National Park.*” Ruth was one of the co-authors of the chapter on trumpeters. Lead Editor Douglas W. Smith, former Senior Wildlife Biologist in Yellowstone National Park, shared:

“Trumpeters had no greater friend, and her passion seeped through on every conversation we had—through the phone and gushing in person. She taught and schooled me like no other and I cherish our conversations. And at the heart of her love was Yellowstone swans—she told me her love formed while watching them alone at Grebe Lake as a young woman. I never forgot that and had that thought in my mind whenever I did anything with swans in that park. I refer to her writings frequently and still learn from them. She had many unfinished plans and ideas to execute. Her passing is tragic and too soon. And swans have lost one of their most important voices. This is a void that will be hard to fill. For her, we all need to work harder for the swans. She would want that, and it would respect her legacy.”

For her outstanding contributions to swan conservation and research, Ruth received a Lifetime Achievement Award in October 2023 at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium.

2023 Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium



On October 26th, NRCC hosted the 9th biennial Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium at the Center for the Arts. Despite an overnight storm bringing measurable snow amounts across the region, more than 120 participants attended the day-long event focused on *Building Successful Strategies for Conservation* in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The day began with a keynote address from the Wallace Stegner Professor of Law at the University of Utah, Robert Keiter, who provided a thorough synopsis of the many dimensions of transboundary ecosystem conservation. Robert is one of the region’s preeminent legal scholars and historians, having written about law and ecology in the GYE since the late 1980s. He discussed elk migrations, mining, wilderness, backcountry recreation, and much more – illuminating the large-scale patterns occurring in the region and what might be needed to transcend the jurisdictional complexity of the GYE.

Next, Michael Whitfield and Doug Smith discussed their efforts to organize institutional capacity across landscape borders and the importance of moving beyond single-purpose thinking in conservation. Aaron Bott and Matt Barnes discussed the stories and values that wolves incite in humans and how these perceptions and beliefs need to be upgraded to live successfully with wolves and bears. The final panel featured Katie Shepherd Christiansen and Todd Wilkinson, who asked participants to question our assumptions about the GYE and consider our responsibility to future generations.

The Quick Talks sessions featured 23 researchers and leaders on topics ranging from whitebark pine conservation, human-bear conflicts, working lands initiatives, the evolutionary history with predators, and much more. Afterward, biologist, educator, and writer James Halfpenny received the Craighead Conservation Award, and dedicated local volunteer Mary Lohuis received the Raynes Citizen Conservation Award. A Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Ruth Shea in honor of Ruth’s memory and her decades of commitment to trumpeter swan conservation.

The evening keynote presentation was given by international conservationist, Spanish biologist, and author of *Effective Conservation: Parks, Rewilding, and Local Development*, Ignacio Jiménez, who shared lessons on how to enact practical conservation projects from his three decades of experience across many continents. Ignacio presented his “Full Nature” approach, which connects nature and people in mutually beneficial ways.

The day before the symposium, NRCC hosted a workshop for 50 leaders and engaged citizens on the potential of developing a long-term, grand strategy for conservation in the GYE.

Thank you to our Gold sponsors (Meg & Bert Raynes Wildlife Fund, Ricketts Conservation Foundation, and Teton Conservation District), Silver sponsors (EcoTour Adventures and Guides of Jackson Hole), and Bronze and Community sponsors!

Please visit NRCC’s website (www.nrcccooperative.org) to read the Quick Talk abstracts.



New Projects from Katie Shepherd Christiansen

Two new interdisciplinary projects by NRCC’s Artist in Residence, Katie Shepherd Christiansen, are bringing guidance and hope to secure a future for nature and people in Greater Yellowstone and beyond. The first, unveiled at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium, is the *One Nature Forest*. Composed of towering wood and metal sculptures displaying hand painted images of nature paired with bold, evocative verse, the artwork aims to inspire connection to self, one another, and the natural world. Katie is now coordinating the large-scale placement of replicated nature posts for outdoor installation across the landscape in parks, yards, and diverse public spaces, creating a visual declaration of community values in nature and hope for our future. Those interested in planting a nature post at their home, organization, or local park can reach out to Katie and learn more at onenatureforest.org.

Katie is also leading a three-armed multimedia project: an illustrated seasonal almanac to the region, a film documenting Christiansen’s experience creating the book, and an outreach campaign. The seasonal almanac will apply and integrate scientific knowledge across an array of ecological and cultural subjects to bring this world-renowned ecosystem’s cyclical, concurrent happenings to life. Christiansen is writing the book through

seasonal residencies occurring at locations across the ecosystem, including Paradise Valley, MT, the National Elk Refuge, AMK Ranch (GTNP), and the Alpine Science Institute in Lander. Weaving storytelling, illustration, and photography, the book offers a tangible framework for living a life in support of coexistence.

Akin to the book, the companion film will unveil a personal, tactical example of living in synchronicity with the wild landscapes of Greater Yellowstone. Taking on the complexity of the intersection of nature, culture, community, motherhood, and creative work, the film follows Christiansen along on her writing residencies as these real-life threads influence and inspire her work to preserve nature for future generations.



Autumn Magpie. One of a series of seasonal paintings featured in Katie’s forthcoming seasonal almanac.

Katie’s *One Nature Forest* calls for increased awareness, empathy, and connection within our wild and human communities, and within ourselves:

May we walk in awe...
May we see ourselves in them...
May we become merged...



Nature Conservation in the GYE: Past, Present, and Future

By Robert B. Keiter, Photographs by Kate Ochsmann
This is article is based on Robert Keiter’s Keynote Address at the 2023 Jackson Hole Wildlife Symposium

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is both an extraordinary and complex place where wild nature coexists with a diverse array of human communities. Known for the world’s first national park, the GYE has long served as a testing ground for progressive nature conservation policies. Indeed, significant changes have come to the GYE during the past sixty years and continue today, posing new issues and challenges for those managing and living within the ecosystem. What lessons can we glean from the past that might help us to navigate the future and preserve the region’s natural attributes and wild character for future generations? Is there an overarching strategy that might aid GYE nature conservation efforts?

The GYE is commonly described as one of the largest nearly intact temperate ecosystems in the world. Stretching across 24 million acres and covering parts of three states, it boasts all of the species present when Euro-Americans first appeared on the scene and holds the headwaters for three continental river systems. Federal lands in the form of two national parks, five national forests, three wildlife refuges, and BLM acreage predominate,

accounting for around 18 million acres. Much GYE national forest land—roughly ten million acres—is protected as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or roadless lands. About six million acres are in private hands, much of which is open ranch land that also provides critical wildlife habitat and welcome open space. The GYE extends across 20 counties, containing an economically and socially diverse number of towns that ring the ecosystem. Twenty-seven Native American tribes are historically connected with Yellowstone National Park.

Consequently, the GYE is awash in jurisdictional complexity, such that no single entity has authority over this expansive region. The National Park Service oversees Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks under a preservation mandate; the U.S. Forest Service administers the region’s national forests under a multiple use standard (except for designated wilderness lands); and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service manages the region’s three national wildlife refuges under a dual conservation and recreation mandate. State and local governments are responsible for the GYE’s private lands under relatively weak state land use planning

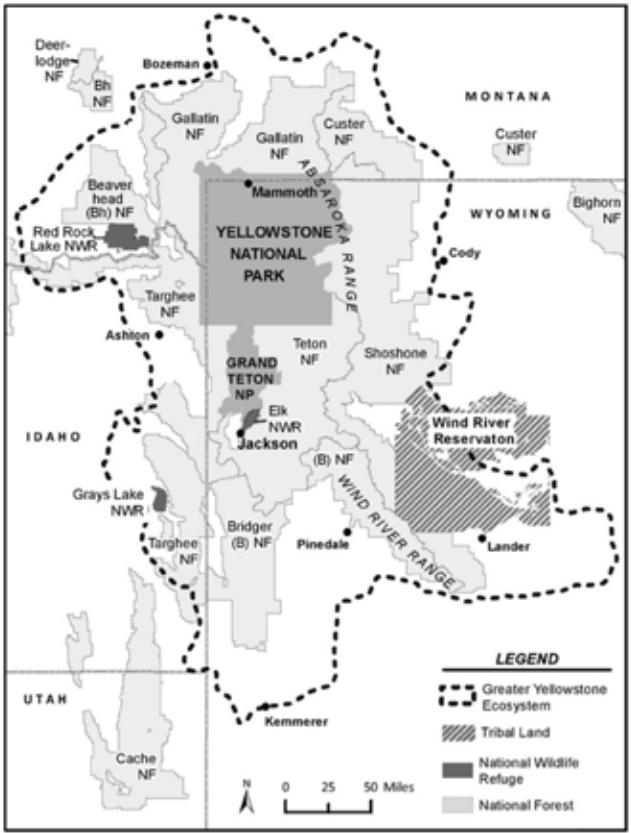


and zoning laws. GYE wildlife, paradoxically, are managed under often conflicting federal and state laws; when in the national parks, animals are protected (except elk in Grand Teton National Park), but when they cross onto national forest and private lands, they are subject to state wildlife and hunting laws, unless protected under the federal Endangered Species Act, as the grizzly bear is. As sovereign entities, the GYE tribes have authority over their own lands and wildlife, as well as long-standing treaty rights. Simply put, the region is a political and legal mosaic.

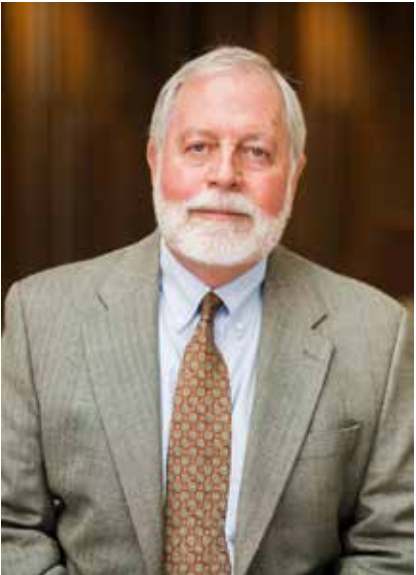
Over the years, this complex jurisdictional setting has been a major contributing factor to the region’s often contentious resource management controversies. The origins of these GYE controversies can be traced to the 1960s, when the Leopold Report transformed Park Service policy to one of natural regulation, while the Wilderness Act gave the Forest Service a similar hands-off management standard for designated wilderness lands. Soon thereafter, NEPA provided the public and the courts a role in federal agency decision processes, while the Endangered Species Act brought the federal government into wildlife management. By 1990, the GYE idea and related ecosystem management concepts were taking hold, loosely knitting the region’s public lands together

for conservation purposes. But that era was also marked by intense conflict over timber harvesting, mineral leasing, mining, and livestock grazing in the GYE national forests, driven by the goal of preserving the region’s ecological integrity in the face of an industrial onslaught. Through a series of court rulings, White House level interventions, and congressional legislation, along with new scientific information and a perceptible shift in public values, industrial scale activity on the GYE national forests has been scaled back dramatically. Early in this process, the federal agencies embarked upon an ill-fated Vision process seeking to elaborate management goals across the region, but were thwarted by intense local political pressures—a lesson that still resonates today.

Meanwhile, wildlife controversies have festered over grizzly bears, wolves, elk, and bison, often pitting federal and state interests against one another as these animals have shown no respect for our man-made boundaries. Individual interagency committees, such as the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, have proven helpful in addressing these matters and breaking down jurisdictional complexities. At the same time, tourism and outdoor recreation have developed into mainstays in the economic



The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem
Map Credit: *Yellowstone's Survival and Our Call to Action: Making the Case for a New Ecosystem Conservation Story* by Susan Clark



Robert is the Wallace Stegner Professor of Law, University Distinguished Professor, and founding Director of the Wallace Stegner Center for Land, Resources, and the Environment at the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law. Robert’s research focuses on public lands, national parks, and wildlife law and policy. His books include *To Conserve Unimpaired: The Evolution of the National Park Idea* (2013); *Keeping Faith with Nature: Ecosystems, Democracy, and America’s Public Lands* (2003); and *The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem: Redefining America’s Wilderness Heritage* (1991). His current book project on *Conserving the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem* will be published by the University of Chicago Press next year. He serves on the National Park Service Advisory Board, and as trustee for the National Parks Conservation Association and the Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law.

life of many GYE communities. Indeed, hordes of new visitors and recreationists are putting substantial pressure on the region’s national parks and forests, creating environmental damage and user conflicts, while also contributing to social justice concerns. In short, one set of conservation challenges on the GYE’s public lands has given way to a new set of challenges.

With more people discovering the GYE as a desirable place to live and play, the region’s private lands have increasingly become a focal conservation concern. Population growth is endemic across the GYE, which is putting pressure on the region’s lower-elevation and ecologically-important private lands. The need and demand for more housing has accelerated subdivision of ranchlands, eliminating critical wildlife habitat, fragmenting important wildlife corridors, and diminishing the region’s open spaces. Unlike on the GYE federal lands, the legal tools to address these private land pressures are based in state law, which is generally weak across the region in deference to strong property

rights sentiments. Consequently, private conservation easement transactions have become the tool of choice to protect wildlife habitat and corridors on the region’s private lands, while federal funding is also being used to promote conservation values on these lands. This incentive-based approach to private land conservation in the GYE has taken hold, but it is a race against time as the pressures on the region’s private lands continue to mount.

In this complex ecological and jurisdictional setting, it is challenging to conceive a single strategy to promote meaningful nature conservation. The failed federal Vision process along with an abiding local distrust of the federal government support this observation. Moreover, the three GYE states are not always in harmony themselves, as reflected in the differences among them over Wyoming’s 22 elk feedgrounds, wilderness designation process, and wolf management. Nonetheless, interagency coordination is occurring and progress is evident on individual issues where, for example, the relevant federal and state agencies

have cooperatively addressed grizzly bear and bison management while also establishing the Path of the Pronghorn migration corridor. The now expanded Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee provides an available forum to further improve federal-state-tribal coordination over individual conservation matters.

In this era of climate change and rampant development pressures, new larger scale and cooperative conservation strategies that extend across the GYE and beyond are plainly essential. It is no surprise that ecosystem management in the GYE is expanding into a broader landscape conservation approach that includes the region’s private lands as well as public lands, a fact reflected in ongoing efforts to protect vital wildlife migration routes. Such collaborative efforts will likely continue with a focus on individual conservation issues, but at an appropriate scale given the current challenges confronting the GYE. Nothing less will do to ensure the ecological integrity and wild attributes of this extraordinary area over the long term.



*Yellowstone National Park's
Northern Range.
Photo credit: Sam Feibel*

Beyond Borders: Lessons from Yellowstone and the Amazon

By Ana Elisa Lambert, NRCC Resident Fellow

BEGINNINGS

My curiosity about the connection between nature and human society began in childhood. Growing up, I noticed the significant difference between my visits to coffee farms with my dad and my urban life in Guadalajara, the third-largest city in Mexico. I initially explored this interest from a technical perspective. For my environmental engineering thesis, I conducted a water quality study in a low-income community to support the development of a management plan for improved water access. Toward the end of the project, I realized that I could not provide long-lasting solutions, mainly because the problem was not an engineering one but a piece of a larger social and economic issue. This experience showed me I needed a more “holistic” approach to problem-solving concerning environmental challenges. Where to start?

SHAPING MY NEW APPROACH

With this realization and question, I pursued a master’s degree at the Yale School of the Environment in 2015. I decided to

focus on the larger context of environmental issues to balance out my engineering background. During my first semester, I was introduced to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE), an experience that would significantly reshape my perspective.

Visiting the GYE for the first time in 2017 went beyond appreciating its stunning landscape full of wildlife. The GYE was more than just an interesting backdrop to my travels. The GYE is a living system—an interplay of biophysical and social (cultural) forces and factors. Witnessing this real-time interplay solidified my perspective that conservation is an intricate intersection of biophysical and human-social dynamics. This relationship is an ongoing story shaped by our choices, decisions, and many individual and collective actions we take.

Witnessing an example of the interaction of human and nonhuman lives was a transformative experience. Meeting the dedicated individuals responsible for GYE’s conservation was profoundly insightful. I admired their commitment, integrity, and tireless efforts. Leaving the GYE made me wish more diverse

people could have a similar hands-on experience. I reflected on how such experiences could potentially reshape our perspectives, actions, and future contributions to ensure a sustainable future for this unique place.

The GYE’s pressing issues—for instance, animal migrations, the coexistence of large carnivores, and overcrowding by humans—demand urgent attention. The question remains: What steps should we take to address these challenges?

GLOBAL PARALLELS

In 2018, back in Latin America, I dedicated myself to supporting efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade with the Wildlife Conservation Society. I analyzed WCS’s strategies and how they grapple with national and international legal frameworks. A central theme emerged: what we do to and for wildlife hinges on how we perceive and value them. This resonated with my observations in the GYE.

In 2021, I started my Ph.D. at the University of Manchester in the UK. My focus is on expert organizations and their diverse engagement in the interconnection of nature and people. I see this as a complex, dynamic policy process. The framework and methods I learned during my first visit to the GYE provide a solid grounding for my current research on the conservation policy process in the Brazilian Amazon.



*Top: The author's first visit to the Amazon in 2019.
Bottom: The author's recent visit to the Amazon for her PhD research.
Photo credit: Ana Elisa Lambert*

The vast Amazon, with its diverse stakeholders and global interests, presents a complex conservation puzzle. Similarly, the GYE faces intricate environmental, political, and cultural challenges. Both regions share the reality that technical solutions alone fall short, as the pressing issues stem from deeply rooted economic, political, and cultural factors.



The author (third from left) with peers during a field visit to Yellowstone National Park in March 2023. Photo credit: Maggie Hart

From my experiences in the GYE, coupled with my fieldwork in Brazil, three vital lessons emerged, applicable to both regions:

1. We must broaden our understanding and frameworks to comprehend the local, regional, and global environmental crises. This is particularly relevant for areas like the Amazon and the GYE, as their ecological fates have implications across all scales.
2. The global perspective is as vital as taking a local view. In regions like the Amazon and the GYE, their ecosystems influence the global system and local realities. This raises questions about our responsibility and accountability that extend beyond specific regions and geographic boundaries.
3. A comprehensive strategy is crucial for safeguarding these ecosystems. We need to address the collective challenge of securing a healthy future. This requires transcending ingrained and at times narrow and incomplete beliefs and practices. It requires thoughtful pragmatism, adaptability, and purposefulness.

A RETURN TO GYE AND REPEATED INSIGHTS

I returned to the GYE in 2023 through a placement program at the University of Manchester in partnership with NRCC. I conducted interviews with representatives from different institutions. From these, a particular set of themes and concerns emerged. These were broadly similar to what people articulated in the Brazilian Amazon. A key observation shared by many is that fragmented thinking dominates management and policy. In both cases, a paradox is inherent to conservation and the enjoyment of nature: “Once you allow human access and people’s use of land, it is impossible to scale back, even when problems it creates are clear.”

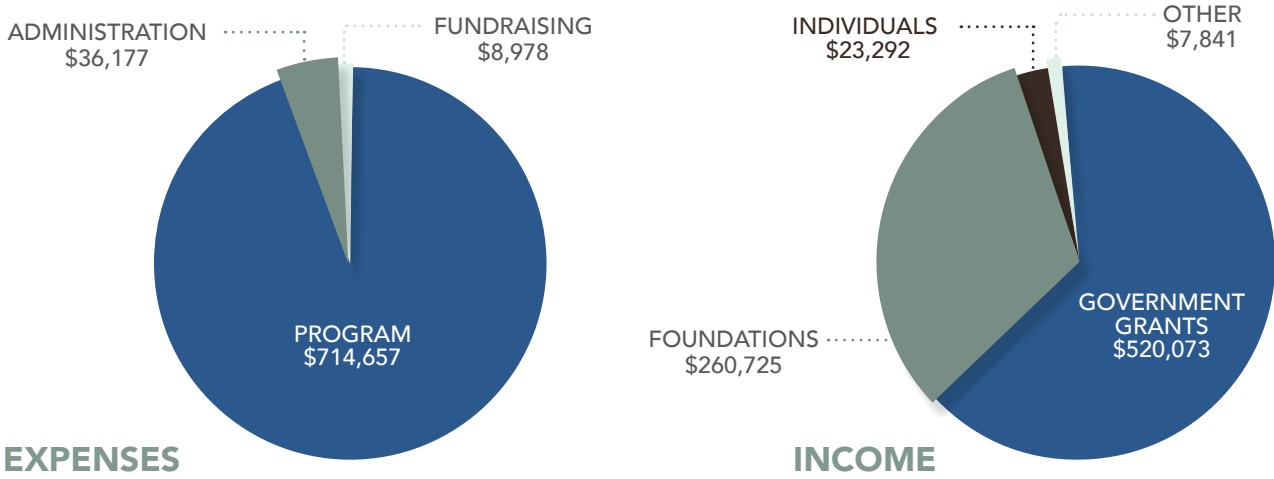
CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

Substantial challenges exist. My view is pragmatically hopeful because I have interacted with many people in the GYE and the Amazon. As stewards of the Earth, be it on a regional, national, or international scale, we must ground our commitment to our shared future—the planet and all its human and nonhuman inhabitants. My goal is to translate these ideas into action within academia, research, and NGOs. Every individual has the potential to contribute to conservation and address its challenges. The time is now, and nothing could be more urgent.

2022 FINANCIAL REPORT

NRCC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization headquartered in Jackson, Wyoming. Our revenue comes from a wide variety of sources including foundations, government agencies, and individuals.

In 2022, 94% of all expenditures directly supported conservation projects.



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