



CAMPAIGN REPORT 2008-2014

Thank you... For keeping Wyoming Wild and Working



The Nature Conservancy
in Wyoming (as of June 30, 2014)

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Andrea Erickson Quiroz, *State Director*
Molly Hampton, *Director of Development*
Paula Hunker, *Associate State Director*
Arlen Lancaster, *Conservation Initiatives Director*
Jim Reasor, *Director of Finance*

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Dear Friends,



Six years ago, we embarked on our *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign to safeguard the best of Wyoming: our vast grasslands, our headwaters and the majestic Greater Yellowstone region.

We wanted to make a lasting difference in the places we love and increase our pace of conservation in these lands and waters. We wanted to partner with landowners, communities and organizations that share our commitment to Wyoming's future. We wanted to stretch ourselves by working on hard issues like energy development and water conservation. We had big dreams for sure, but we set ourselves a deadline: our chapter's 25th anniversary in 2014.

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Now it's time to say thank you for all you have made possible. I'm happy to report that we have tangible results to celebrate together. We passed major milestones in this campaign: 1 million acres of land and 1,500 river miles conserved together with partners since we began working in Wyoming. And much of this was achieved just in the last six years (see our By the Numbers section).

Did it all come out exactly as planned? No, of course not. There are always efforts that don't come out as hoped for. Did we do this all alone? Absolutely not! We couldn't do anything without your support, and without the opportunity to work in partnership with so many other committed citizens and organizations in Wyoming.

Today we're confident that we can dream of even more ambitious goals to protect what we love about Wyoming. And that's because of people like you. Thank you!

Andrea Erickson Quiroz
State Director

ON THE COVER Moving herd on the Pitchfork Ranch © *Russ Schnitzer*
Our friends around the state tell us what they love about Wyoming. © *TNC*

THIS PAGE Andrea Erickson Quiroz © *Joe Quiroz*

NEXT PAGE Antelope © *Scott Copeland*; Wyoming toad © *Margo Hennes*
Summer intern © *Amy Zimmermann*; Sage-grouse © *Joe Kiesecker*

By the Numbers

You've made so much possible during our *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign. Here's what we've accomplished in the last six years with our many partners around the state—and why there's still so much work to be done.



357,755

acres of conserved sagebrush

147,703

acres of conserved grasslands

132,030

acres of conserved winter habitat and migratory routes in the Greater Yellowstone



11,640

acres of protected wetlands



653

miles of protected or restored rivers and streams



28

students completing summer land management internships on our ranches and preserves

51

number of Wyoming's most sensitive terrestrial wildlife species that are highly vulnerable to future development, climate change or disease*

73%

areas with high potential for new wind development overlapping with areas that have been identified as important for migrating birds*

2/3



projected sage-grouse losses that could be averted in Wyoming with conservation efforts*

**Based on studies and reports authored or co-authored by The Nature Conservancy's scientists in Wyoming.*

Find more at nature.org/wyoscience

Resilient Lands

With your help... we've reached (deep) into our conservation toolbox to safeguard Wyoming's wild and working landscapes.



As dusk washes orange over Red Canyon Ranch, John Coffman, The Nature Conservancy's southern Wyoming land steward, leans against an old buck and rail fence outside the ranch's historic headquarters.

After a long day, he's talking shop (cows wrangled, orioles spotted) with the ranch's new livestock lessees, Rhett Abernathy and Garric Martin.

Red Canyon Ranch once served as a stagecoach stop on the road to Lander. Now these three men are walking the ranch's latest path: local ranchers Rhett and Garric lease the grazing

operation, while John and his conservation team steward the property and facilitate research and education programs.

For the Conservancy, this partnership is part of a much bigger picture along the Lander Front.

In addition to Red Canyon Ranch's 50,000 acres of leased and private lands, the Conservancy has worked with others to help conserve even more.

BIG WINS FOR LAND PROTECTION

During our six-year *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign, the pace of this land protection work has accelerated with two very big projects you've made possible: 3,500 acres in conservation easements on Lander's Double A Ranch and 3 Bar X Ranch. These properties connect to a vast network of working ranchlands that are already under easement and more than 500,000 of public acres.

This connection is crucial for wildlife—providing winter range and yearlong habitat for deer, elk and moose; summer range for pronghorn; and breeding and nesting habitat for sage-grouse.

There will always be more work tomorrow...but so much to be proud of today.

A SITE FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

We're putting our tools to work on the Lander Front—conservation easements, stream restoration, grazing management research, scientific planning for sage-grouse, and educational programs for the next generation.

As in any strong relationship, we are committed to this special place—and will continue to look after this landscape into the future.

“There are still pieces of land that are at risk,” says Paula Hunker, associate state director for Wyoming, who has worked for the Conservancy in Lander for almost two decades. “There are still projects that need to be done.”

You don't have to tell that to John, Rhett and Garric as they watch the sun finally dip behind Limestone Mountain on Red Canyon Ranch. There will always be more work tomorrow...but so much to be proud of today.



Healthy Waters

With your help...we've rolled up our sleeves (literally) to restore watersheds for healthier communities.



Katherine Thompson, The Nature Conservancy's Northwest Wyoming Program director, has learned how much sweat stream restoration takes while working on a large project along Grass Creek between Meeteetse and Thermopolis.

Stepping out from behind her computer to wield pliers, wire and other tools of the trade, Katherine has helped fence off aspen stands, monitor water quality, and install off-creek water tanks that divert livestock from streams.

“I like finding where we all agree: what’s good for sage-grouse, what’s good for cows, and what’s the overlap with people?”

Watershed restoration has been one of the Conservancy's primary goals during our six-year *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign, and we have conserved a total of 650 river and stream miles with partners across the state.

HEALTHY STREAMS MAKE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The Grass Creek project alone has positively impacted more than 160 miles of streams. In addition, LU Rancher Mike Healy took a commitment to healthy water one step further when his family secured a 2,800-acre easement with the Conservancy that will have a positive impact downstream. The Conservancy had help in this major undertaking, garnering critical support from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, along with countless other organizations, volunteers and stewardship assistants working on the ground.

Everyone involved in this project recognizes the connection between healthy streams and healthy communities. Eroded and damaged stream banks degrade water quality by sending sediment downstream that's harmful to wildlife, people and irrigation systems.

TAKING STREAM RESTORATION TO SHERIDAN

In Sheridan County, we're helping with watershed restoration along the Tongue River, where high levels of *Escherichia coli* and *Cryptosporidium* bacteria and invasive plants plague some areas. In addition, aging, inefficient irrigation diversions are creating unhealthy conditions for fish, wildlife and people.

Going forward, it will only become more critical to ensure that our communities have healthy water, as demand from downstream users increases and climate change alters river flows.

“Watershed restoration is about finding the conservation sweet spots,” says Katherine. “I like finding where we all agree: what’s good for sage-grouse, what’s good for cows, and what’s the overlap with people? The longer I look at it, the more obvious the connections become.”



“Water is by far the most important issue of our time. In a dry state like Wyoming, it connects us, it’s our common agenda, it’s our future.”

– Fran and Lenox Baker

Fran and Lenox Baker live on the Pitchfork Ranch near Meeteetse, Wyoming. Their generous commitment to the *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign was one of the critical gifts that secured our goal at the end. The \$750,000 donation has established a new matching fund supporting The Nature Conservancy’s statewide water conservation efforts. With this match and a previous \$250,000 pledge, the Bakers made a \$1 million gift to our campaign.

To make your match, contact Heather Wisniewski at 307-332-2972.

Securing the Future of Conservation

With your help...we've rocked out (and counted butterflies) to engage a broad cross-section of Wyoming citizens and decision makers in conservation.



Standing on stage with his guitar, Jay Shogren didn't look like he was at a Nature Conservancy board meeting.

Jamming in front of several hundred people gathered in Lander's city park, the acoustic roots musician and Conservancy trustee was performing to help celebrate the Wyoming chapter's 25th anniversary.

It was also the chapter's summer board meeting. But instead of sitting around a conference table, trustees were doing a different kind of work: cooking on the grill and greeting concert guests.

Getting people outside and into conservation has been a priority during our six-year *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign.

"The Conservancy understands the need to energize more people in conservation," says Shogren, who is not only a trustee and musician but also an acclaimed University of Wyoming environmental economics professor and a member of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

ROCKIN' OUT FOR NATURE

The Conservancy sponsored statewide concerts last spring and summer with the WYOmericana Caravan, featuring award-winning bands J Shogren Shanghai'd, the Screen Door Porch and The Patti Fiasco.

"Music is one way to bring more people under the tent because it works across generations and cultures," says Shogren. "Music can help us better invigorate the message of why we all need conservation, why the next generation needs it, and why Wyoming needs it."

BUILDING A BASE FOR SUPPORT

Other public outreach events have invited people to hike at our preserves and ranches, join in Earth Day activities in Jackson, help with butterfly counts, and inventory birds, bees and more in a 24-hour "bioblitz" at Red Canyon Ranch. Our Cody "Wild West River Fest" celebrates the Shoshone River, and the annual Antelope Dash is a walk/run fundraiser in Curt Gowdy State Park.

Inspiring the next generation is important, too—since they'll be Wyoming's stewards in the future. For the past six years, we've sponsored the "I Believe in Conservation" high school photo contest to connect young people with their natural world through the lens. And for the second summer in a row, urban teens with an interest in environmental science have learned hands-on conservation at our Heart Mountain Ranch and Tensleep preserves.

In the end, having more advocates for Wyoming's lands and waters will make a difference far beyond this year— it's an investment in the future that we need to make today.



Going Forward

With your help... we've chartered a strategic plan for the coming years that will focus our work and make an impact to achieve resilient lands, healthy waters, and a secure conservation future.

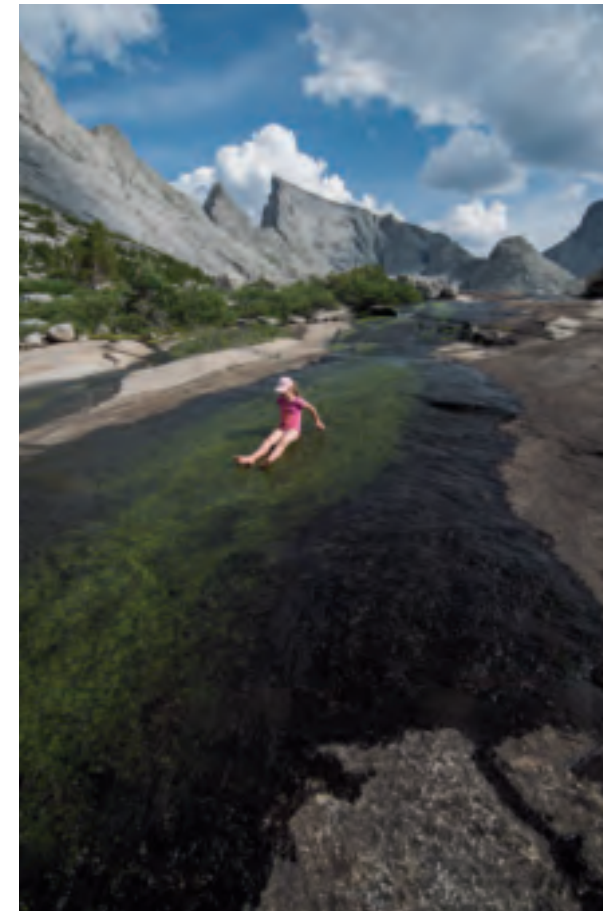
We talked with trustee Mary Anne Dingus, who led the development of the chapter's latest strategic plan, a guiding document that will help prioritize our work for the next five years. Her family has owned the TE Ranch in Cody since 1972, which has fostered her love and appreciation of the landscape, wildlife and people of Wyoming.



THE PROCESS: It took us over a year and a half to evaluate our previous strategic plan and craft this new one. It was a very inclusive and thorough process, and that's why I believe it will be successful. We wanted our plan to reflect our passion for what we do, and help us measure and evaluate our strategies as we carry out the work.

THE BIG QUESTIONS: There are more conservation needs within the state than we are able to tackle all at once. So we had to ask the big questions: Where is our conservation work likely to have long-lasting benefit? Where and how can The Nature Conservancy use its strengths to add the most value to nature? In what areas do we want to expand our efforts and grow toward our long-term desired outcomes? How can we best partner with others?

PLANNING WITH IMPACT: I think many non-profits have strategic plans, but I was impressed with how robust a planning process we had, including feedback not only from staff and board members but from partner groups, community leaders and peers within the Conservancy. As a donor, it helps me feel secure that our precious resources are put where they will have the greatest impact.



Your Return on Investment

This fiscal year (July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014), we conserved together with partners approximately 171,000 acres of land through conservation easements, restoration, or improved management of lands and water, at a **cost of roughly \$29 per acre!**

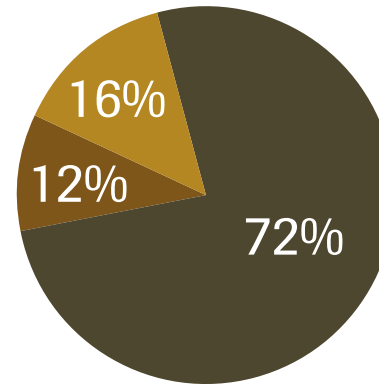
In addition to the acres and streams they helped conserve, your contributions support many other areas of conservation work, such as science, policy, outreach and education represented in this report. We hope this FY14 financial summary illustrates the critical importance of supporters like you who have helped the Conservancy safeguard Wyoming's unique natural legacy for future generations.



THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S PROGRAMMATIC EFFICIENCY

(From audited FY13 numbers)

Fundraising and Membership 12%
General and Administration Programs 72%
Programs 16%



HISTORICAL TO DATE

25 Years of Conservation Results

Lands Conserved:

490,412 legally protected
 (including 173 easements totaling 288,224 acres)

681,684 acres conserved through stewardship and habitat improvement

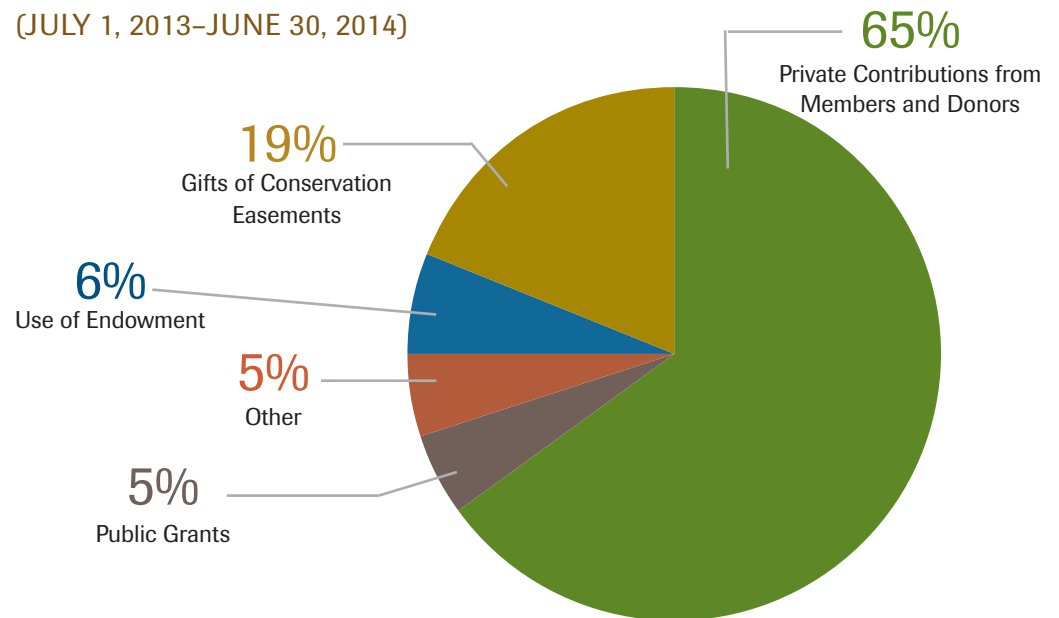
Waters Conserved:

936 miles legally protected

545 miles restored

FY14 SOURCES OF REVENUE

(JULY 1, 2013–JUNE 30, 2014)





“Like” the Wyoming Nature Conservancy on Facebook and receive updates on our work!



You love Wyoming... and it shows! Thank you for your help supporting our *Wyoming: Wild and Working* conservation campaign.

We all love something about Wyoming! © TNC

