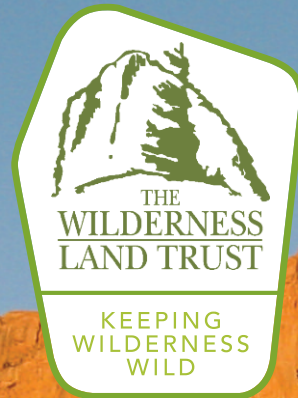




THE WILDERNESS LAND TRUST
2024 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

We Keep the Promise of Wilderness – by acquiring and transferring private lands to public ownership to complete designated and proposed wilderness areas, or directly protect wilderness values.

VALUES

We revere our remaining wild places, a legacy to pass on to future generations, the tenacity to work until the job is done and treating everyone with fairness.

VISION

A future where all wilderness areas are complete and protected from development, where their biodiverse landscapes thrive, sustain life, and provide refuge for wildlife and people alike.

Last month marked the 60th anniversary of the Wilderness Act signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and the establishment of our nation's Wilderness Preservation System.



This landmark conservation bill was designed to permanently protect wild, untrammled landscapes for future generations to discover, explore, and experience the profound beauty and solitude of nature. Upon passage in 1964, the Wilderness Act originally designated 9.1 million acres in 13 states. Today, that number has grown to more than 111 million acres of designated wilderness in 44 states and Puerto Rico.

While this may sound like a lot, it is important to remember only 5% of the entire United States is permanently protected as wilderness. To make matters worse, one-third of these wilderness areas contain private inholdings within their boundaries that were grandfathered in upon designation. These inholdings are gaping holes in the fabric of the landscape that don't carry the same protections as the surrounding wilderness: roads can be built, minerals can be extracted, old-growth timber can be cut, and residential homes and lodges can be constructed. Those are the threats facing these properties today, but who can say what new threats they will face 60 years from now as technology continues to advance exponentially?

One of the greatest strengths of the Wilderness Act is how it is written to endure. Rather than list out specific prohibited uses, it draws a line in the sand at 'mechanized'. While the Act's authors likely couldn't have anticipated how widespread recreational drones would become, the set of protections they crafted still apply to them.

Just as the Wilderness Act endures, we need solutions for the threats still facing wilderness that endure.

Our model of protecting inholdings by acquiring and transferring them to be added to the wilderness has been successful since 1992. Over the course of our 32-year history, the Trust has permanently protected over 58,000 acres via the transfer of 592 properties in 120 wilderness areas, and helped complete 17 wilderness areas by removing the last remaining inholding.

Our Wilderness Opportunity Fund (WOF) gives our community the opportunity for their own enduring contribution to protect the wild places you love. Gifts to the WOF provide the critical financial resources for the Trust to purchase and transfer these private inholdings not just once, but over and over again. Establishing a revolving WOF in your name, or in honor of a loved one, is a beautiful way to create an enduring legacy for future generations while multiplying your impact.

Thank you for being a part of The Wilderness Land Trust family, and your dedicated support of our mission.

Please enjoy the pages ahead as we highlight the remarkable people and newly created wilderness that make this effort so worthwhile. We look forward to generating many more success stories in the year ahead.

Sarah Chase Shaw, Board Chair

Brad Borst, President

ACQUIRED

Last year the Trust acquired 45 parcels in Virginia, Utah, Washington, California, and Colorado totaling 2,144 acres.

With our first acquisition east of the Rockies, the Tye River project in **Virginia's Priest Wilderness** secured an important connection between the wilderness and watershed in the Appalachian Trail corridor. Cougar Canyon, our first Utah project, protected high-development pressure lands connecting the **Cougar Canyon** and **Slaughter Creek Wilderness Areas** in southwest Utah's Washington County – the fastest-growing metro area in the US. In Washington, we continued our work in the Silver Creek drainage of the **Wild Sky Wilderness** with Rambler Lode, bringing us one step closer to unifying protection across the fragmented landscape. Farther south in the central California Coastal Range, we acquired critical habitat in the heart of the **Ventana Wilderness**.

Finally, we protected four projects in Colorado. Just outside the **Sangre de Cristo Wilderness**, our Blanca Peak project protected the slopes of one of the four sacred Navajo peaks. West of there, we protected 17 properties along the famed Alpine Backcountry Byway in proposed wilderness. In the high-value development market surrounding Aspen, we worked with Pitkin County for a landmark conservation project in the **Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness** at Snowmass Falls Ranch. And nearby, just east of Independence Pass, we protected the slopes of Mount Champion, just outside the **Mount Massive Wilderness**.

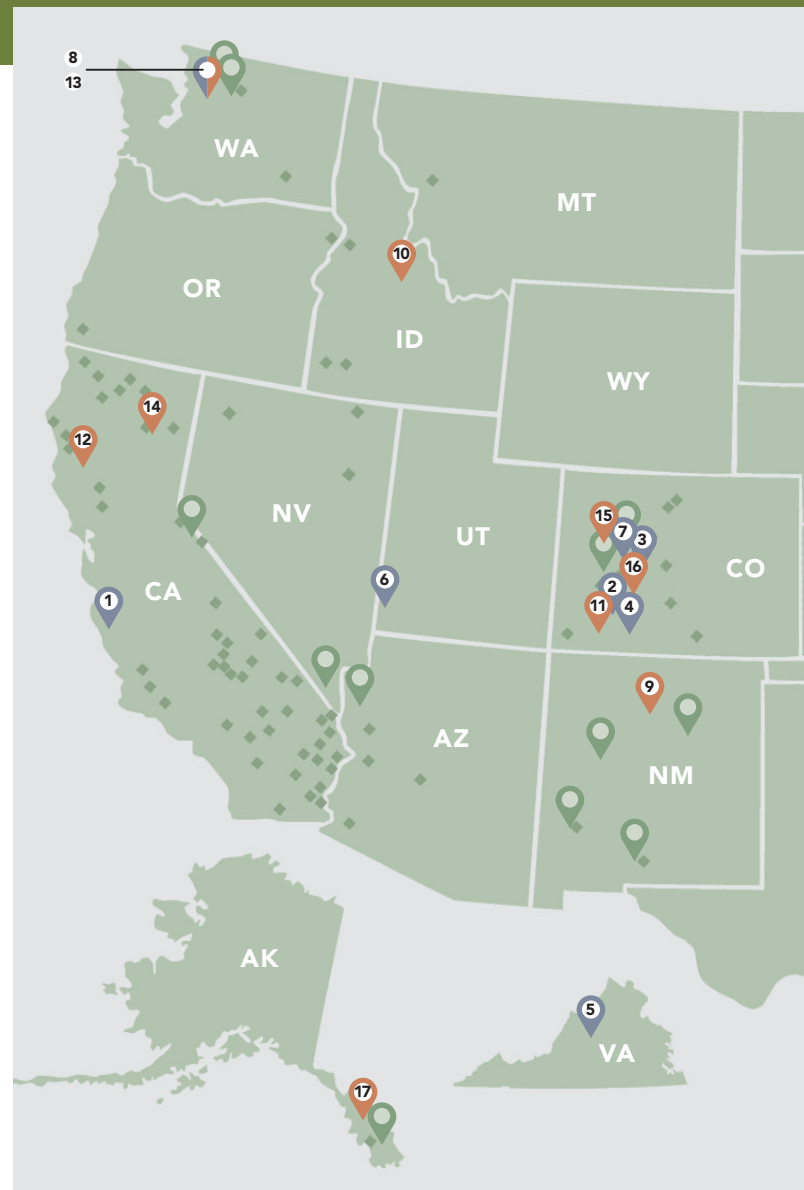
TRANSFERRED

Last year the Trust transferred 15 parcels in New Mexico, California, Washington, Idaho, Colorado, and Alaska totaling 1,094 acres.

In arid New Mexico, the Frijoles Spring property was added to **Santa Fe National Forest**, protecting an important water source and completing the wishes of the original landowner who left the property to the Trust in his will. In California, our Thomas Creek project helped unify public lands adjoining the **Sanhedrin Wilderness**, creating habitat connectivity and protecting steelhead spawning grounds. Farther north, our Hat Creek project was added to Lassen National Forest in **Lost Creek proposed wilderness** area.

In Washington, West Seattle Lode was added to the **Wild Sky Wilderness**, and in Idaho's **Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness**, slopes overlooking the Salmon River were added to the wilderness. Three properties protecting high alpine habitat were added to Colorado wilderness: in the **Weminuche Wilderness**, **Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness**, and **Holy Cross Wilderness**.

Finally, in Alaska, our Wheeler Creek property was added to the **Kootznoowoo Wilderness** in the Tongass National Forest, protecting salmon spawning grounds and brown bear habitat.



Acquired in 2023-24	Transferred in 2023-24	Other current projects	Completed projects
45 properties 2,144 acres	15 properties 1,094 acres	50 properties 3,315 acres	482 properties 51,514 acres

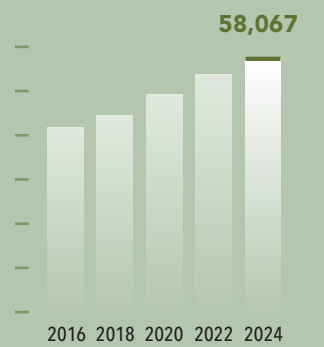


	PROJECT	WILDERNESS AREA	AGENCY	PARCELS	ACRES
ACQUIRED	1 Church Creek	Ventana Wilderness, CA	USFS	1	160
	2 Red Cloud 17	Red Cloud & Handies Peak WSA, CO	BLM	17	162
	3 Champion Mine South	Mount Massive Wilderness, CO	USFS	6	275
	4 Blanca Peak	Sangre de Cristo Wilderness, CO	USFS	6	46
	5 Tye River	Priest Wilderness, VA	USFS	1	10
	6 Cougar Canyon	Cougar Canyon Wilderness, UT	BLM	2	713
	7 Snowmass Fall Ranch*	Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness, CO	USFS	5	650
	8 Rambler Lode	Wild Sky Wilderness, WA	USFS	7	128
	TOTAL			45	2,144

*This property was purchased by Pitkin County in partnership with the Trust.

TRANSFERRED	9 Frijoles Springs	Santa Fe National Forest, NM	USFS	1	57
	10 Surprise Lode	Frank Church Wilderness, ID	USFS	2	38
	11 Emerald Lake 2	Weminuche Wilderness, CO	USFS	1	7
	12 Thomas Creek	Sanhedrin Wilderness, CA	USFS	4	917
	13 West Seattle Lode	Wild Sky Wilderness, WA	USFS	1	15
	14 Hat Creek	Lost Creek Proposed Wilderness, CA	USFS	3	35
	15 Copper Glace Lode	Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness, CO	USFS	1	10
	16 Northern Lode	Holy Cross Wilderness, CO	USFS	1	10
17 Wheeler Creek 5	Kootznoowoo Wilderness, AK	USFS	1	5	
	TOTAL			15	1,094

TOTAL WILDERNESS ACREAGE PROTECTED



The Trust worked with Pitkin County for a landmark conservation project at Snowmass Falls Range protecting 650 acres in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness.



INDEPENDENCE PASS FOUNDATION

Partners are an integral part of our work at the Trust: private landowners, federal agencies, tribes, and local nonprofits and community groups all help shape and fund our work. As a national organization, strong relationships with the local communities we work in help ensure we are reflecting local priorities, incorporating local and indigenous knowledge, and including the people who love the place we protect most in our decision-making.

The Independence Pass Foundation (IPF) has been a valuable partner to the Trust in our work in Colorado and the Roaring Fork Valley for decades. The mission of The Independence Pass Foundation is to restore and protect the ecological, historical, and aesthetic integrity of the Independence Pass corridor and to encourage stewardship, safety, and appreciation of the pass. Over the years IPF has helped cultivate and fund several Trust projects in and around the Mount Massive and Collegiate Peaks Wilderness Areas. In 2021, IPF Executive Director Karin Teague and several groups of IPF volunteers, along with the Roaring Fork

Outdoor Volunteers, spent many hours helping dismantle the modern additions to and contents of a historic cabin on our 19-acre Panama Principle Lode project.

“The Wilderness Land Trust has been critical in preventing mining, road building, and other development on Independence Pass, all antithetical to our mission of protecting the ecological, historical, and aesthetic integrity of this extraordinary alpine landscape. It truly takes a village to preserve our wild places, for future generations and for all the living beings that call these places home, and we are grateful to have The Wilderness Land Trust in our village!”
–Karin Teague, IPF Executive Director

We’re grateful for IPF, not just for their support of the Trust, but for all the incredible work they do to protect one of Colorado’s most scenic and iconic landscapes.

View of Independence Pass.
Below: IPF volunteers helping to restore the Panama Principle Lode property.



Courtesy of Karin Teague



Thank you to all the partners who make our work possible

Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Aspen One
Aspen Valley Land Trust
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
California Wilderness Coalition
City of Aspen
Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, & Safety
The Conservation Alliance
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
DeChambeau Creek Foundation
Eastern Sierra Land Trust
Friends of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks
Friends of the Eel River
Friends of the Inyo
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Idaho Conservation League
Independence Pass Foundation
Los Padres Forest Watch
Mono Lake Committee/
Mono Lake Foundation
Mount Shasta Trail Association
National Park Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Park Service
Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Dept. of Agriculture
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
Northeast Wilderness Trust
Open Space Institute
Payette Land Trust
Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Resource Legacy Fund
Rewilding Institute
Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers
Sierra Club, Redwood Chapter
Siskiyou Land Trust
Southeast Alaska Land Trust
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Stu Smith – GIS Specialist
The Wilderness Society
Town of Snowmass Village
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
Ventana Wilderness Alliance
Virginia Wilderness Committee
Watershed Biodiversity Initiative
Wilderness Watch
Wilderness Workshop
Willits Environmental Center
Wyss Foundation

PROTECTING THE GILA IN CELEBRATION OF ITS CENTENNIAL

In late July the Trust purchased a 40-acre inholding in New Mexico’s Gila Wilderness. It’s a story that started many years before, though it’s hard to pinpoint where exactly it begins. One could start with the Mogollon people who built their homes in natural caves near the confluence of the West and Middle Forks of the Gila River in the early 13th century, and cultivated the surrounding lands with squash, corn, and beans. Or one could start with Aldo Leopoldo, who at the age of 24, rode through the high mesas and steep canyons surrounding the Gila River and fell in love with the landscape. Or 12 years later when ranchers proposed building a road through the middle of this landscape and Leopold submitted his own proposal to protect it, establishing the Gila as America’s first designated wilderness area.

That is when the story of Spring Canyon and the lands around it diverge. While the broader landscape was protected as wilderness, the Spring Canyon inholding remained privately owned and vulnerable to development. Its next chapters would see fence lines built, apple trees planted around the spring, and generations of cattle and horses grazing its meadows. Eventually, in 2005, The Wilderness Land Trust began working with the landowner to pursue acquisition of the property. And finally, this past winter, almost 20 years later, the landowner decided the next chapter of this land he loved and had cared for should be conservation.

The story of Spring Canyon will continue long after us, benefiting future generations of people and wildlife.

While the Trust is thrilled to have been able to protect Spring Canyon, and looks forward to working with the Gila National Forest to transfer it to public ownership, the cast of characters who made it possible is much larger. Once the opportunity to protect the property came to fruition, we needed to raise \$152,000 for its purchase in a short amount of time. A dedicated Trust donor directed that a portion of their revolving Wilderness Opportunity Fund be used for the project, and we put out a call to raise the remaining dollars. Our friends at Wilderness Watch, The Rewilding Institute, Virginia Wilderness Committee, and Northeast Wilderness Trust shared the story with their communities, and in total 162 donors stepped forward, joining the story, to help complete the purchase. As with all the wild places we work to protect, the story of Spring Canyon began long before us and will continue long after us, benefiting future generations of people and wildlife.



Thank you to those who gave generously to protect Spring Canyon

Anonymous (18)
Becky Abbott
Travis Allen
Judy & Fordyce Anderson
Kathryn Anderson
Pete Aniello
Todd Babick
Elizabeth Barnhard
Tracy Bartlett
Cynthia Bates
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Edward M Sullivan
Deborah Swartz
Darby Tatsak
Dr. Paul F Torrence
Ian Torrence
Steven Tracy
Shana Van Meter
Alain Vasserot
Rene Voss
Richard Vultaggio
Steven Wallis
Tedd Ward Jr.
Patricia Whyde
Kenneth Wilcox
Darlene Wolf
Kari Wouk
Gregory Zahradnik
Angela Zehava
Shannin Zevian

A LASTING LEGACY

While the Trust is most often described as a wilderness organization, our work is also about legacy. We help landowners create their legacy by protecting the properties they love as wilderness and public lands. We have steadily grown our national wilderness legacy by adding new lands to designated wilderness every year in our 32-year history. And through our Wilderness Opportunity Fund (WOF), donors can establish their own conservation legacy by helping to protect not just one project, but many projects over the course of decades, multiplying the impact of their gift.

The WOF is a revolving fund dedicated to protecting private lands in and around wilderness. A tax-deductible gift to the WOF allows the Trust to purchase a property at risk of development. Then, once that property transfers to public ownership, often to be added to designated wilderness, the initial gift is freed up to be reinvested into protecting another property. This reinvestment can happen over and over again. The ability to move quickly, at the pace required in competitive real estate

markets, to acquire properties from willing sellers when the opportunity arises, is critical to our work. And a well-funded WOF is critical for the ability to move quickly on these high-conservation value opportunities.

Whether you are considering making an annual gift to the WOF, establishing a named revolving fund in honor or memory of a loved one, or including the WOF in your estate planning, your support will leave a lasting legacy for the wild places you love.

In 2016, Sharon and Malcolm Clark of Mammoth Lakes, CA established a named WOF capital revolving fund with the Trust for the acquisition of private inholdings. Their initial investment was directed to purchase two parcels totaling, 480 acres, in the Santa Lucia and Garcia Wilderness Areas in California. Upon transfer of these parcels in 2019, the fund was reinvested and has now turned over several times, enabling acquisition of eight additional properties in the Chuck River Wilderness (AK), Wild Sky Wilderness (WA), and Henry M. Jackson Wilderness (WA).



LEGACY IN ACTION: SHARON AND MALCOLM CLARK

“I can tell you exactly when it started for us. We were heading to Seattle for the Worlds Fair in 1962 and decided to camp on Mt. Rainier. Back then you could drive into Sunrise Camp, and we’d arrived and pitched our tent in the dark. The next morning we woke up and looked down at the clouds. It was breathtaking. That’s the moment we fell in love with wilderness and the mountains.”

Sharon and Malcolm Clark both grew up in Texas where their childhoods were filled with outdoor memories: fishing and camping with their families, and going to summer camp. During those childhood experiences, followed by several decades living in the Midwest, they didn’t have much of a concept of public lands, let alone wilderness. But after that seminal sunrise on the northwest slope of Mt. Rainier forty years earlier, the Clarks chose to retire to the Eastern Sierra of California to enjoy the mountains they love full time. “This is where we wanted to live and die, where we can sit on our deck in rocking chairs and look at the White Mountains, where we can walk across the street and be in National Forest,” says Sharon.

Opportunity Fund (WOF) which has now helped to protect properties in three states, and will continue to be reinvested for decades to come.

For the Clarks this kind of long-term investment in protecting the wild places they love is also about the next generations of their family. Wilderness has become part of their family’s story, centered around connection and experiences together. One of Malcolm’s earliest encounters with wilderness was on a family trip to the Grand Canyon in 1947, and he’s returned many times since: in college as a young adult exploring the world on his own, and again in 1987 to float the river with Sharon and their teenage daughters. In 2020 they returned to raft the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon again with their daughters, now grown, and grandchildren. Just as their connection to wild places is shared across generations of their family, their commitment to protecting wild places will continue for generations through their revolving investment.

The Clarks first learned about The Wilderness Land Trust through one of our partners, the Eastern Sierra Land Trust. “What the Trust does just makes so much sense. Protecting inholdings and protecting the wilderness we already have is so critical”, they reflect. Inspired by this mission and their own love for wilderness, the Clarks have become steady supporters of the Trust. In 2016 they donated to establish a named revolving fund in our Wilderness

Rebekah, Sharon, Sabrina, and Malcolm on a 1987 rafting trip down the Grand Canyon.



For 32 years, The Wilderness Land Trust has been focused on one thing: making wilderness areas complete and secure. With sincere gratitude, **we thank each and every one of you** for your generous investment in our work.

SENTINEL SOCIETY DONORS

Sentinel Society members provide essential support for ongoing wilderness lands projects by generously contributing \$1,000 or more annually.

Sentinel Society Vista Circle (\$50,000+)

- Anonymous
- Thomas A & Currie Barron, Merlin Foundation
- Chrest Foundation
- Sharon Raven & Warren Malcolm Clark
- Kim Kanas
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- Palladium Foundation
- Stuart Smith

Sentinel Society Legacy Circle (\$10,000+)

- Anonymous (3)
- David & Lyn Anderson
- Aspen Business Center Foundation
- Brad Armstrong, The Bamboo Fund
- Andrew M Bellofatto
- James T Blomquist & Rosemarie Kapolczynski
- Bradley W Cameron
- Philip & Amanda Freeman
- Ray Hohenberger
- Norcliffe Foundation
- Open Space Institute
- Alan Penczek
- Resources Legacy Fund
- Denise Schlener & George Bren
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- Sarah Chase Shaw & Richard Shaw, BF Foundation
- The Conservation Alliance
- The Jake Foundation
- Dr. Paul F Torrence
- Wayne Pfeiffer

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- Carol Wood & John H. Stansfield
- Marsha McMahan Zelus

WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY FUND

Donors to the Wilderness Opportunity Fund invest in the Trust's revolving capital fund for wilderness land acquisitions. The fund includes donations, grants and loans – including project specific funds.

- Anonymous
- Sarah Chase Shaw & Richard Shaw, BF Foundation
- Palladium Foundation
- Sharon Raven & Warren Malcolm Clark
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- Ernie Reed

WILDERNESS CHAMPIONS

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- Ingrid Akerblom
- Jon Gibans
- Bradford Gibson
- Randy Gold
- Robert H Graham
- Gerilyn Grange
- Doug & Peggy Graybeal
- Benjamin Green & Anita Punla
- Griffin Charitable Fund
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- Jeremy Hakes
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- Bryan L Wyberg
- Andrew Zepp
- Edward Zukoski

We appreciate the opportunity to recognize every donor. The Donor Honor Roll above includes gifts received during our last fiscal year, July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. If you find an error or omission please accept our sincere apologies and contact us so that we may correct our records.

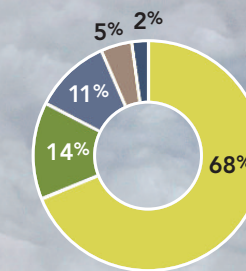
In late July the Trust purchased the 40-acre Spring Canyon inholding in America's first designated wilderness: The Gila. (see story on page 7)

Fiscal year July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024
Unaudited – see audited financials on our website in November 2024.

Beginning Net Assets **\$3,270,802**

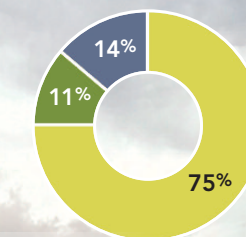
OPERATING INCOME

- Contributions \$1,540,197
- Land Sales \$311,773
- Grant Income \$242,458
- Other Income \$104,417
- Reimbursements \$45,650
- TOTAL** **\$2,244,495**



OPERATING EXPENSES

- Lands Program \$1,040,914
- Administrative \$151,170
- Fundraising \$194,734
- TOTAL** **\$1,386,818**



Ending Net Assets **\$4,128,479**



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2024 ANNUAL REPORT



*Cougar Canyon,
our first Utah project*

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