



2025 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.

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT

As we reflect on the past nine years at The Wilderness Land Trust, we extend our deepest gratitude to our president, Brad Borst, whose tenure is soon coming to a close. Brad's steady leadership and unwavering dedication have left a lasting imprint on both our organization and our mission.

When Brad first stepped into the role of president, the Trust was a nimble, project-driven organization, able to act swiftly to protect threatened wilderness inholdings. Under his guidance, we have matured into a resilient, sustainable institution – one equipped to remain relevant in the face of rapid ecological, climatic, and political change. Through this evolution, we never once strayed from our core mission: to protect and preserve wilderness.

Brad's calm presence has provided the grounding influence the Trust needed at this pivotal stage. He understood that lasting conservation depends not only on bold vision, but also on strong systems, sound decision-making, and a capable team. Under Brad's leadership, we

It's hard to put into words the emotions that go through your mind when you step away from something you love. For the past nine years, I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as president of The Wilderness Land Trust and all the expectations, challenges and responsibilities that come with leading a national wilderness land trust.

That's not to suggest it's been easy, especially when faced with such daunting challenges as the Covid-19 pandemic, raising enough money to make payroll every month, ensuring we had the financial resources to purchase a property that threatened the surrounding wilderness, let alone navigating an administration (twice!) that is prioritizing resource development over protecting our remaining wild places.

adopted a long-term strategic vision, expanded public awareness, deepened donor and foundation support, grew the organization's capacity, and broadened the scope of our projects to protect treasured wild places across the country. Today, thanks to his leadership, The Wilderness Land Trust stands as a well-governed, resilient organization, ready to meet the challenges of the future.

The board is in the home stretch of hiring a new executive director, who we hope to have in place by early 2026. As Brad prepares to pass the baton to his successor, we pause to celebrate his many contributions, his steady hand, and his heartfelt commitment to wilderness.

Happy trails, Brad!

–Sarah Chase Shaw, Board Chair



But without fail, there were reminders every day that we would prevail. Sometimes it was a nice note from a donor letting me know they were increasing their giving because they appreciate the work we do. Sometimes it was agency staff working overtime to ensure the timely transfer of a property. But more often than not, it was simply knowing the caliber of people who are deeply involved in this organization on a day-to-day basis.

Farewell, and from the bottom of my heart – **THANK YOU ALL.**

–Brad Borst, President



MEASURING

THE CHALLENGE

When The Wilderness Land Trust was founded over three decades ago it was to address a problem that Jon Mulford, a young attorney in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley, was encountering in his work with public lands: management conflict stemming from private inholdings within wilderness areas. So the Trust was created with a mission to address this problem.

Over the years, as the Trust's work grew in scale, the problem we were working to address stayed largely the same, but became better defined. We began inventorying these private wilderness inholdings in western states using a largely analogue system. As with any mission-driven organization, the better we can understand and measure the problem we are working to address, the better we can measure our impact, track our progress, and look for new opportunities.

So this year we created the first of its kind GIS-based national inventory of private lands in and around wilderness. With it completed for the lower 48 states, it has refined our existing inventories for the west and created our first inventory for states east of the Rockies. And it has given us a more accurate assessment of the work left to be done to complete our vision for a future where wilderness areas are complete and protected from development.

In the lower 48 states there are over 3,000 properties totaling 275,000 acres of inholdings within designated wilderness areas, and another 9,200 private properties totaling 3 million acres adjoining designated wilderness areas.

After over 30 years of work to protect more than 59,000 acres of these lands, it could be discouraging to see these totals rise from our previous inventories, to see it as the goal post being moved. But we see it as an exciting opportunity: the chance to help protect new landscapes and solve new challenges, to build new landowner relationships, and to connect with new community partners.

In the coming months we'll complete our inventories of Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, and continue to refine our GIS analysis tool to evaluate each property in the inventory for conservation values. Thank you to the grants and donors who funded this project and made it possible. Together we are deepening and expanding our impact.



ACQUIRED

Last year the Trust acquired 22 parcels in New Mexico, Idaho, California, and Colorado totaling 424 acres.

In celebration of the centennial of America’s first wilderness area, the Trust purchased an inholding in New Mexico’s **Gila Wilderness**, protecting an important year-round water source in the arid climate. With the help of our partner The Payette Land Trust, we acquired an inholding in Idaho’s **Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness** which, with large, connected habitats, is rich in biodiversity and home to over 280 species. We also removed the last remaining threat of development from our 18th wilderness area as we purchased the last inholding in northern California’s **Mount Lassic Wilderness**.

Building off other recent acquisitions in and around the **Handies Peak** and **Red Cloud Peak Wilderness Study Areas** in southern Colorado, we purchased an additional 14 properties that will further help remove the high risk of development in an area popular with multi-use recreation.

STEWARDED

This year the Trust owned and stewarded 71 properties, totaling over 5,500 acres in Colorado, Utah, Virginia, California, Washington, Alaska, New Mexico, Nevada, and Arizona.

Notable work to care for these properties and restore them to their wilderness character was hauling trash and remnants of old mining operations out of Washington’s **Wild Sky Wilderness**, designing a spring box to restore an important water source for wildlife in California’s **Bodie Hills**, and installing two cable nets over mine adits in Idaho’s **Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness** to protect bat colony habitat and ensure public safety.

TRANSFERRED

Last year the Trust transferred 16 parcels totaling 242 acres to public ownership, all in Colorado.

With each property transferred to public ownership in Colorado this year we protected a diverse range of wilderness values. In the **Raggeds Wilderness**, the viewsheds from the popular hiking destinations of Baxter Basin and Daisy Pass have been protected to maintain the wilderness experience for recreationists. To the east, in the **Collegiate Peaks Wilderness**, public access was protected on the Green Mountain Trail, as was public access on the Needle Creek Trail in the **Weminuche Wilderness**.

Finally, in the **Fossil Ridge Wilderness**, ownership has been consolidated across the flanks of Cross Mountain, removing the potential for management conflicts.

Notable work in 2025 included installing two cable nets over mine adits in Idaho’s **Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness** to protect bat colony habitat and ensure public safety.



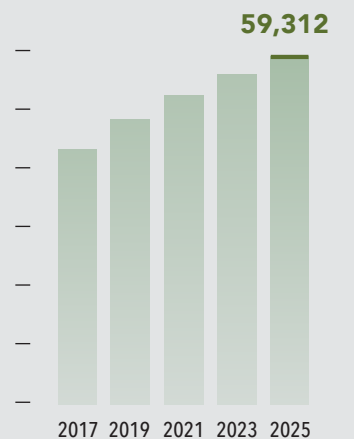
Acquired in 2024–25	Transferred in 2024–25	Other current projects	Completed projects
22 properties 424 acres	16 properties 242 acres	71 properties 5,546 acres	503 properties 53,100 acres



Straeder Lode in Colorado’s Raggeds Wilderness transferred to public ownership this year.

	PROJECT	WILDERNESS AREA	AGENCY	PARCELS	ACRES
ACQUIRED	1 Spring Canyon	Gila Wilderness, NM	USFS	1	40
	2 Annie Creek	Frank Church River of No Return, ID	USFS	5	94
	3 Bear Creek	Mount Lassic Wilderness, CA	USFS	2	160
	4 Sunshine	Red Cloud Peak WSA, CO	BLM	6	60
	5 White Cross	Handies Peak WSA, CO	BLM	8	70
	TOTAL			22	424
TRANSFERRED	6 Straeder Lode	Raggeds Wilderness, CO	USFS	1	10
	7 Panama Principle Lode	Collegiate Peaks Wilderness, CO	USFS	1	19
	8 Needle Creek	Weminuche Wilderness, CO	USFS	3	30
	9 Cross Mountain	Fossil Ridge Wilderness, CO	USFS	11	183
	TOTAL			16	242

TOTAL WILDERNESS ACREAGE PROTECTED



BLANCA PEAK

As I set my eyes on Blanca Peak, rising over the Sangre De Cristo Wilderness in southern Colorado, I'm taken aback by the vastness of the peak and the valley that drains the water from the area. As we hike closer to the base of the peak, my hydrologist instincts kick in as I follow the interconnected channels: these waterways create the headwaters for the Huerfano River.



I'm here on this site visit, my first as a freshmen board member, with The Wilderness Land Trust staff and folks from the U.S. Forest Service and Navajo Nation to visit the 45 acres acquired by the Trust in 2023. Standing here, tracing the waterways that run off the mountain, I'm reminded of the importance of protecting wilderness areas like this because major rivers and their tributaries begin flowing in such areas. Places like the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness provide a huge environmental service to our communities by supplying clean water to users, human and non-human. Everyone needs clean water, and wilderness is essential in providing it.



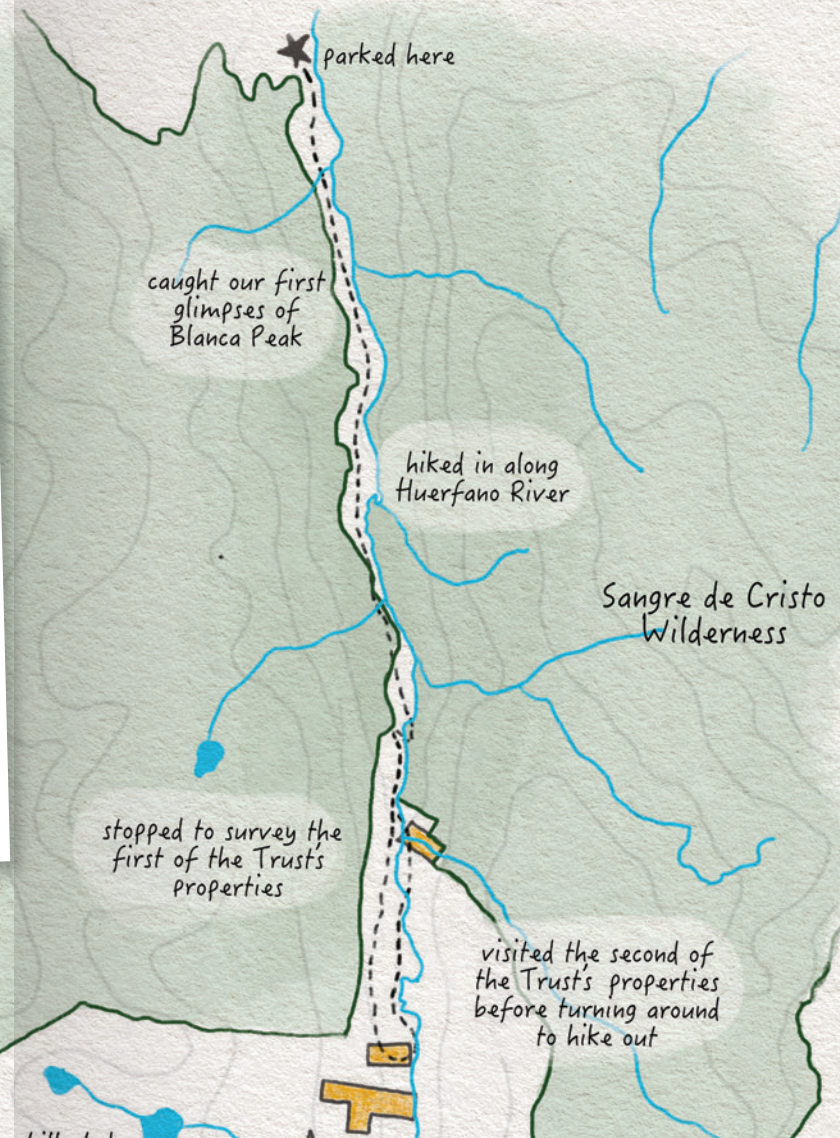
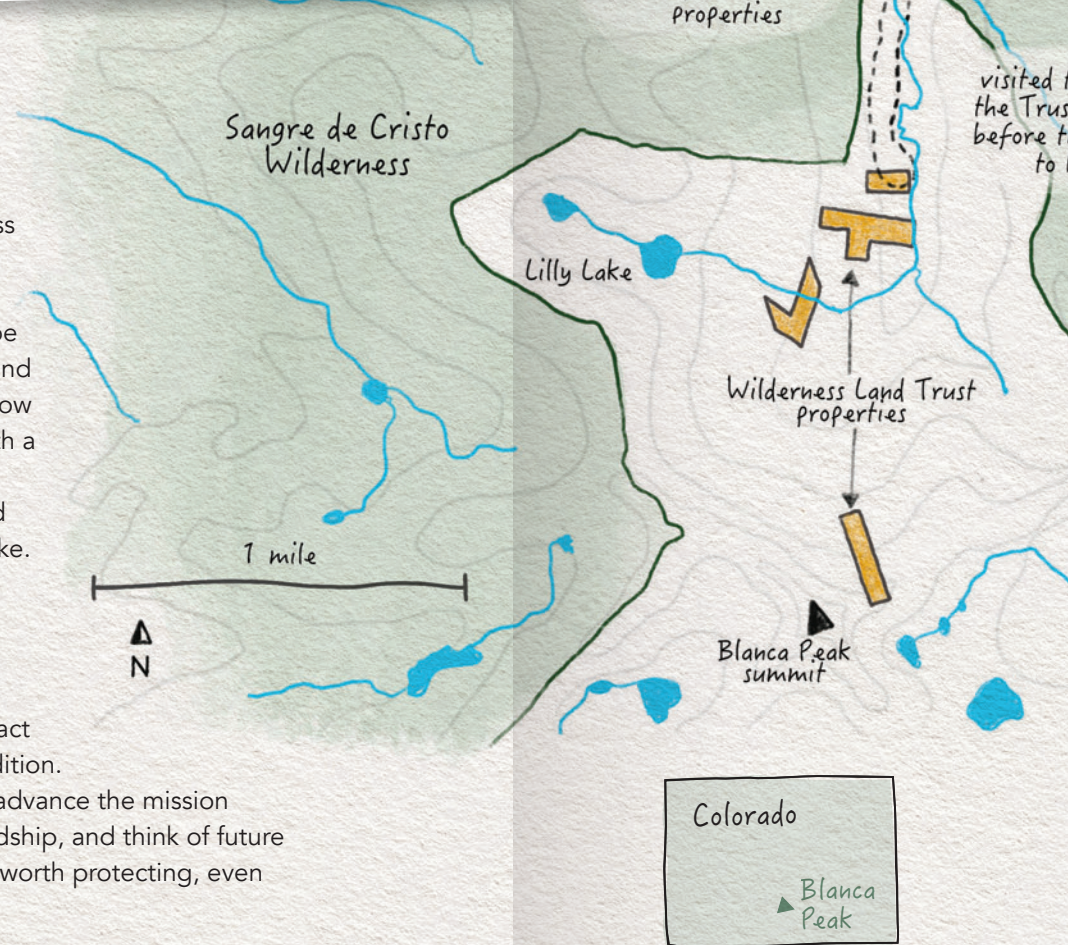
Funk's Thistle

Throughout the day, as our group hikes across the landscape and discusses how to protect precious lands like Blanca Peak and the surrounding Sangre de Cristo Wilderness, I'm reminded how we are all members of different communities tied together with a shared love for wilderness. I've always been fortunate to live in beautiful places close to wilderness, like Flagstaff, Missoula, and now Portland, where I can disappear for a day to fish an alpine lake. It's a privilege I don't take for granted.



We stopped for a snack of sweet cicily, a kind of wild parsley growing near the river

My people, the Diné, have had reverence and close ties to these lands and Blanca Peak for millennia. I feel it is my duty as an Indigenous Person to ensure these lands are accessible and intact for upcoming generations of Diné to explore and practice tradition. Marrying my privilege and Native identity fuels my efforts to advance the mission of The Wilderness Land Trust, practice environmental stewardship, and think of future generations. Places like the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness are worth protecting, even if I never experience the fullness of these places myself.



The afternoon sun starts to cast long shadows as we begin our descent, paralleling the flow of the clear, cold streams. Our path will take us back to the trucks and town, and eventually to each of our homes, while the streams join, growing in width and flow, becoming rivers and the lifeblood of our ecosystems. They form lines of connection, between the pockets of land the Trust is working to protect and the communities who depend on them but may never step foot on them; between me and this peak that is revered by my people; and between our group, hiking in single file, and the generations to come whose boot prints will cover our own in the dusty trail as they take in this wild landscape for themselves.



Colorado Columbines blooming along the trail



Left to right: Erik (Navajo Nation), Destiny (USFS), Mitchel (USFS), Jason (USFS), Me, Richard (Navajo Nation), Michael (USFS), Kelly (WLT)

PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Scott Lynn and Andrea Kachulis with the U.S. Forest Service have long been invaluable for our work in Washington.



At The Wilderness Land Trust our partners play a critical role in the success of our work: from the agency partners we work closely with to ensure our projects are protected as public lands, to the community groups who help us identify at-risk properties and understand the needs of the local community. While they are all important, we are excited to recognize an outstanding relationship as our Partner of the Year.

Scott Lynn, Northern WA Lands Zone Leader, and Andrea Kachulis, Northern WA Lands Realty Specialist with the U.S. Forest Service have long been invaluable for our work in Washington State. This year they really stood out as we worked to complete the transfer of a package of 15 properties totaling

655 acres in the Wild Sky Wilderness to public ownership. "Having spent many hours with Scott and Andrea, both in meetings and on the trails, I know that their dedication to our public lands comes from a genuine love for those lands. This has translated into a willingness to work collaboratively, be flexible, and think outside the box to ensure these lands are protected. It took all of this to make our recent transfer in the Wild Sky Wilderness. Their passion is contagious and I always walk away from my time with them feeling inspired." –Kelly Conde, Senior Lands Specialist

Thank you Scott and Andrea for all you do to protect and steward our public lands, and for being such wonderful partners to work with!

Thank you to all the partners who make our work possible!

- Appalachian Trail Conservancy
- Ascend Wilderness Experience
- 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
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Friends of Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks
- Friends of the Eel River
- Friends of the Inyo
- Friends of Nevada Wilderness
- Independence Pass Foundation
- Los Padres Forest Watch
- Mono Lake Committee/Mono Lake Foundation
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- National Park Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Dept. of Agriculture
- Northern Mendocino Ecosystem Recovery Alliance
- 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
- Southeast Alaska Land Trust
- Stu Smith – GIS Specialist
- The Wilderness Society
- Town of Snowmass Village
- Trout Unlimited
- 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
- Wyss Foundation

David Schroeder of Eugene, Oregon, found his way to a career in conservation by following his intuition. Growing up in a small town surrounded by flat Midwestern farmland, David had no concept of public land – there simply wasn't any around – but he always loved being outside. As a child and into his teens he spent a much time as possible exploring the woods and creeks on farms owned by family and friends. He planned to study engineering in college, but just before classes started he decided on a different path, changing his major to forestry on little more than a gut feeling. After his second year of college he took a summer job in Black Hills National Forest where he fell in love with wilderness, setting wheels in motion that would lead him to a 36-year career with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

After college David joined the BLM as a surveyor working east of the Mississippi. He was good at his job and had started to climb the ladder, but he longed to be in a field office out west. When a temporary forester position opened up in the Lander, Wyoming office he followed his gut once again, from there landing a permanent position in the high desert of eastern Oregon. He spent the bulk of his career in the Eugene district, where he worked as a realty specialist and environmental specialist on a wide variety of BLM projects.

It was on one such project, a multi-agency effort to protect, preserve, and restore wetlands on the western side of Eugene, that he saw firsthand how federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) can be marshaled to protect fragile ecosystems and important wildlife habitat even as human communities grow and change. The City of Eugene noticed it had a stormwater runoff pollution problem. They formed a coalition to tackle the problem by acquiring, restoring, and protecting as much wetland as it could, in partnership with the BLM, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, The Nature Conservancy, and



others. In his capacity as a BLM realty specialist on the project, David was able to use LWCF funds to acquire multiple wetland parcels for the project. The experience was one of the most satisfying of his career. "Rules can change, and public opinions can change," he notes, "but the land is forever."

David doesn't remember how he first learned about The Wilderness Land Trust or exactly what led him to make his first gift of \$50 back in 2002, but he remembers it as a lightbulb moment. "All of a sudden it dawned on me that there could be another prong of attack

in advancing my desire to support public lands. In addition to supporting advocacy groups and making phone calls to public officials and all that stuff,

here was something I could do that would have tangible results." Since then David has supported the Trust for 23 consecutive years, helping the Trust add to wilderness every year. "Whether you care about wildlife, watersheds, recreational access,

or wilderness for its own sake, when the Trust buys a parcel of land and transfers it to BLM or the Forest Service," David says, "you can take that to the bank."

Whether you care about wildlife, watersheds, recreational access, or wilderness for its own sake, when the Trust buys a parcel of land and transfers it, you can take that to the bank.

For 33 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 (3)	Kim Kanas
Thomas A & Currie Barron,	Jack & Sheri Overall
Merlin Foundation	Wayne Pfeiffer
Chrest Foundation	Stuart Smith

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

Anonymous	Steven C Leuthold
David & Lyn Anderson	Family Foundation
Andrew M Bellofatto	The McBride Family, Aspen
Bradley W Cameron	Business Center Foundation
The Electric Company	Alan Penczek
Charitable Foundation	William T Pope
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The Jake Foundation	Sarah Chase Shaw & Richard Shaw,
Philip & Amanda Freeman	BF Foundation
	Andrew F Wiessner

Sentinel Society Leadership Circle (\$1,000+)

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Liz Armstrong	Mark Main
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Kenneth & Eugenia Lange	Edw. F Zimmer Community Fund

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	James L Bauer
Sarah Chase Shaw & Richard Shaw,	Kim Kanas
BF Foundation	Wayne Pfeiffer

WILDERNESS CHAMPIONS

Anonymous (8)
 Ingrid Akerblom
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in honor of Peter Mali
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We appreciate the opportunity to recognize every donor. The Donor Honor Roll above includes gifts received during our last fiscal year, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. If you find an error or omission please accept our sincere apologies and contact us so that we may correct our records.

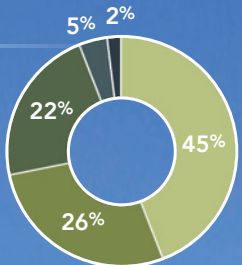
Fiscal year July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Unaudited – see audited financials on our website in November 2025

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

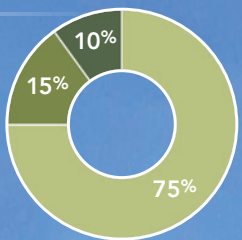
OPERATING INCOME

- Contributions \$1,032,028
- Land Sales \$607,691
- Grant Income \$508,308
- Other Income \$109,818
- Reimbursements \$38,350
- TOTAL \$2,296,195**



OPERATING EXPENSES

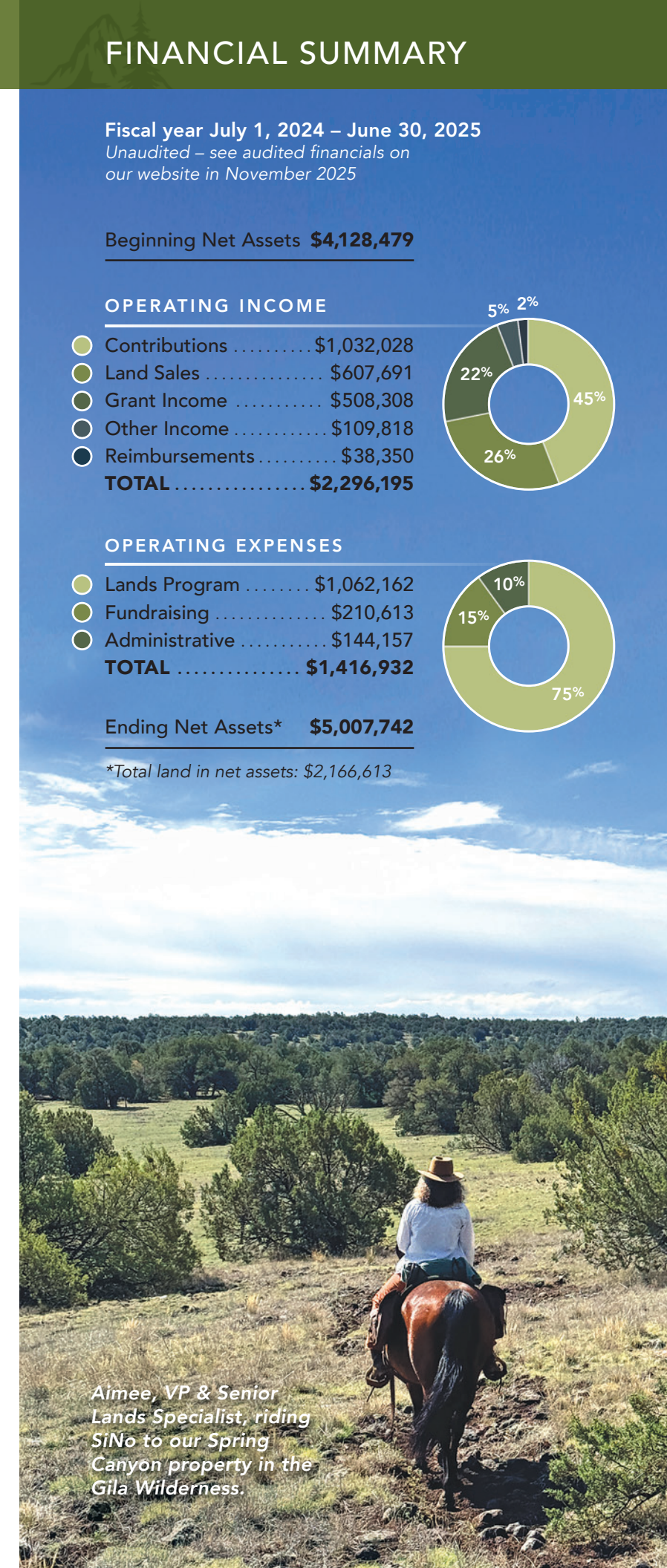
- Lands Program \$1,062,162
- Fundraising \$210,613
- Administrative \$144,157
- TOTAL \$1,416,932**



Ending Net Assets* **\$5,007,742**

*Total land in net assets: \$2,166,613

Aimee, VP & Senior Lands Specialist, riding SiNo to our Spring Canyon property in the Gila Wilderness.





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2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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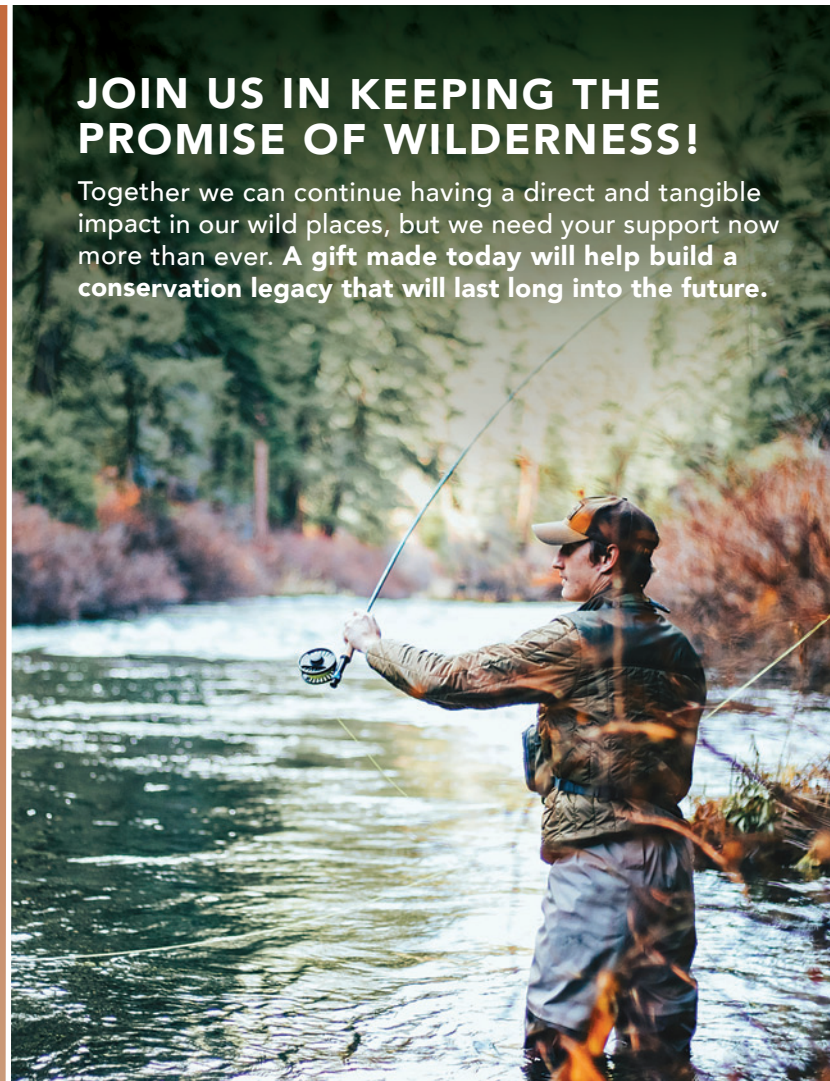
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Please join us
in welcoming
Tim Northrop
(left) and
Stu Smith to
our board of
directors!



JOIN US IN KEEPING THE PROMISE OF WILDERNESS!

Together we can continue having a direct and tangible impact in our wild places, but we need your support now more than ever. **A gift made today will help build a conservation legacy that will last long into the future.**