CAMPAIGN for AMERICA'S WILDERNESS

wild...for how long?

TEN TREASURES | IN TROUBLE

www.leaveitwild.org

Public opinion surveys consistently show that Americans, no matter their demographics or party affiliation—or whether living in urban or rural settings—overwhelmingly support preserving more of America's wilderness heritage. Yet few know that outside of Alaska, just 2.6 percent of the nation's land enjoys permanent protection as wilderness, off limits to drilling, mining, logging, road-building, off-road vehicle abuse, and land sprawl. Fortunately, in communities across the country, people who use and cherish special nearby wild places on our public lands are joining together to ensure that more wilderness—America's common ground—will be left as a generous, natural legacy for future generations.

The tool these people look to for the permanent protection they seek is the Wilderness Act. Their mode of action is persuasion.

Some people are persuaded by concrete facts: that roads have deleterious effects on wildlife by fragmenting habitat; that when off-road vehicles stray into riparian areas, dirt kicked up by their wheels chokes rivers and streams, robbing them of oxygen essential to fish and other aquatic life; that wilderness designation supports myriad important uses including hunting, camping, hiking, firefighting or scientific study (or even livestock grazing where it is already an established use).

Others are persuaded by intangibles: the roll of thunder on a stormy desert afternoon, the brief flash of brilliance when a fish leaps out of the water, the smell of pine woods drenched in sunlight, the all-encompassing solitude of a place untouched by another human presence. To millions of Americans, the certainty that places such as this are preserved, by law, is an important value.

TUMACACORI HIGHLANDS
ARIZONA
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BEAUTY MOUNTAIN
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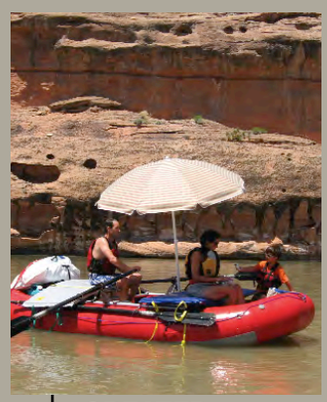

GREATER DOMINGUEZ CANYON
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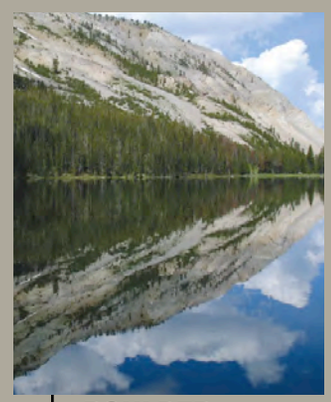

BOULDER - WHITE CLOUDS
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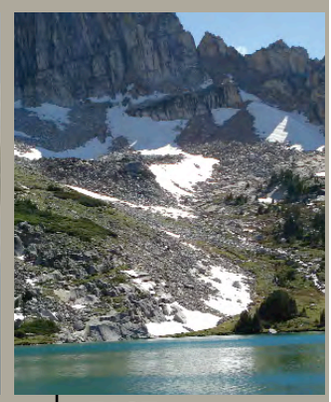

EAST PIONEERS
MONTANA
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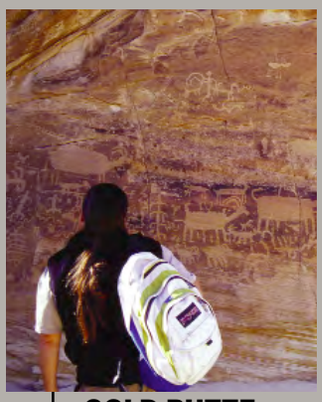
This report profiles, as much as images and words can, the physical, ecological, and ethereal qualities of ten special wild places—havens, quiet refuges from the hustle and bustle of modern life, sanctuaries where nature rules and the signs of people passing through before offer a sense of continuity with an earlier age.

Two of these treasures are in the East; the others lie west of the Rockies. Each exemplifies an important story about what's at stake when it comes to ensuring that there will always be special wild places that exist for the future as they always have, as nature's realm. It's a story that applies to wild public lands all across our country that still have no statutory protection against mining, drilling, and logging—activities that introduce roads and civilization.

One common thread in these stories is the growing threat from the invasion of off-road vehicles that cut trails through fragile desert landscapes, mountain meadows, or pristine riparian areas. From 1972 to 2002, registrations of off-road vehicles, including ATVs, dirt bikes and rock crawlers escalated from 5 million to more than 36 million. Reckless off-roading is now the number-one threat to the nation's landscapes, according to a coalition of rangers and public land managers working with Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (www.peer.org). These law enforcement and natural resource managers say that ORV abuse ruins the land and puts additional demands on an already overburdened ranger force.

The threat grows as development pushes people closer to places that were once far from the beaten path and where the lure of riding off the road into untamed territory and the advent of vehicles that can go farther, faster, and higher up the mountain tempts too many people to disobey the law.



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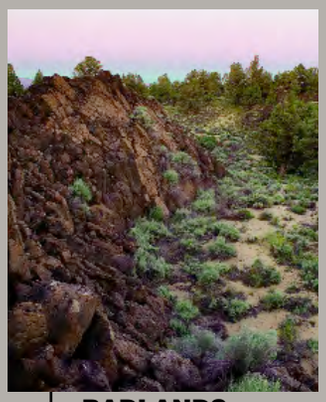

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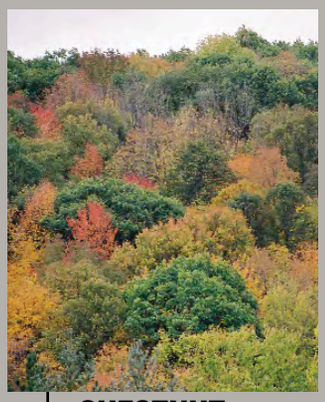

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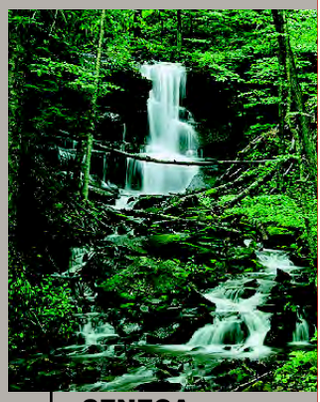

SENECA CREEK
WEST VIRGINIA
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Another risk to these wild lands comes from those intent on drilling or mining what lies beneath. Until public lands are strongly protected through wilderness designation, they remain vulnerable to these threats, in part because current public land management practices still operate under a 1872 mining law which stipulates that mining shall be the predominant use of federal lands. Today there are more than 400,000 active mining claims in the Western states alone.

Luckily, ordinary Main Street people from every walk of life are working to keep the "wild" in yet-unprotected wilderness areas near their communities. Just as the areas featured in this report represent a much larger landscape of threatened wild public lands, the people profiled here are using many modes of citizen action—reporting off-road vehicle abuse to the authorities; helping to document the reemergence of a species once thought to be extinct in the United States (such as the jaguar); writing op-ed columns and letters to congressional representatives; and getting together with their neighbors to organize a grassroots wilderness protection campaign—actions that are helping to move additional wilderness designations out of the realm of wishes and into the reality of congressional action from one corner of the country to another.

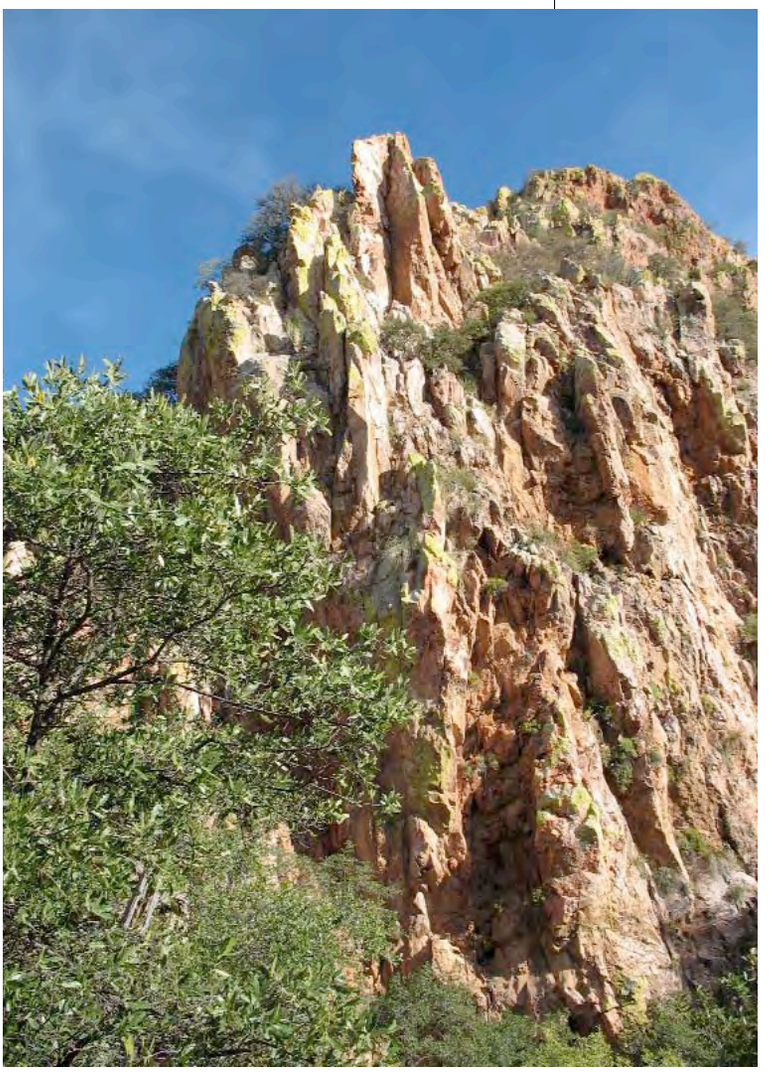
This is not the first time the Campaign for America's Wilderness has issued a report highlighting threatened wild lands. In 2004, we selected "Twelve Treasures in Trouble" to represent the vast panoply of threatened landscapes, a sample of the last vestiges of wilderness in this country. The places covered in that report were threatened by development pressures and the current administration's bid to push sweeping oil and gas drilling seemingly everywhere. It appeared that no wild place unprotected by official designation was safe.

Designating an area for protection under the Wilderness Act is a long and complicated process, for it requires an act of Congress. So it is encouraging to account, four years after our first report, that some parts of Big Wild Nevada have been protected by Congress. Legislation has also been introduced to protect Mount Hood in Oregon and Crawfish Valley in Virginia; New Mexico's Otero Mesa has won some protection from drilling; and a bill to protect the Wild Sky area in Washington is poised for final congressional action.

These are more than straws in the wind; they and other success stories are harbingers of the impact of a growing, resurgent nationwide citizen wilderness movement that gives hope to countless numbers of citizens who are working to make their voices heard in the halls of Congress. The challenges to these many citizen wilderness initiatives are not to be minimized, but the latent power of effective citizen action—the daily work of the Campaign for America's Wilderness and groups we partner with across the country—can become unstoppable.

The threats to fragile still-unprotected wilderness landscapes leave us but one choice, and that is to keep pressing forward—working to gain protection for many additional wilderness areas as our legacy—and our responsibility—to all the generations to follow.

CAMPAIGN
for AMERICA'S WILDERNESS



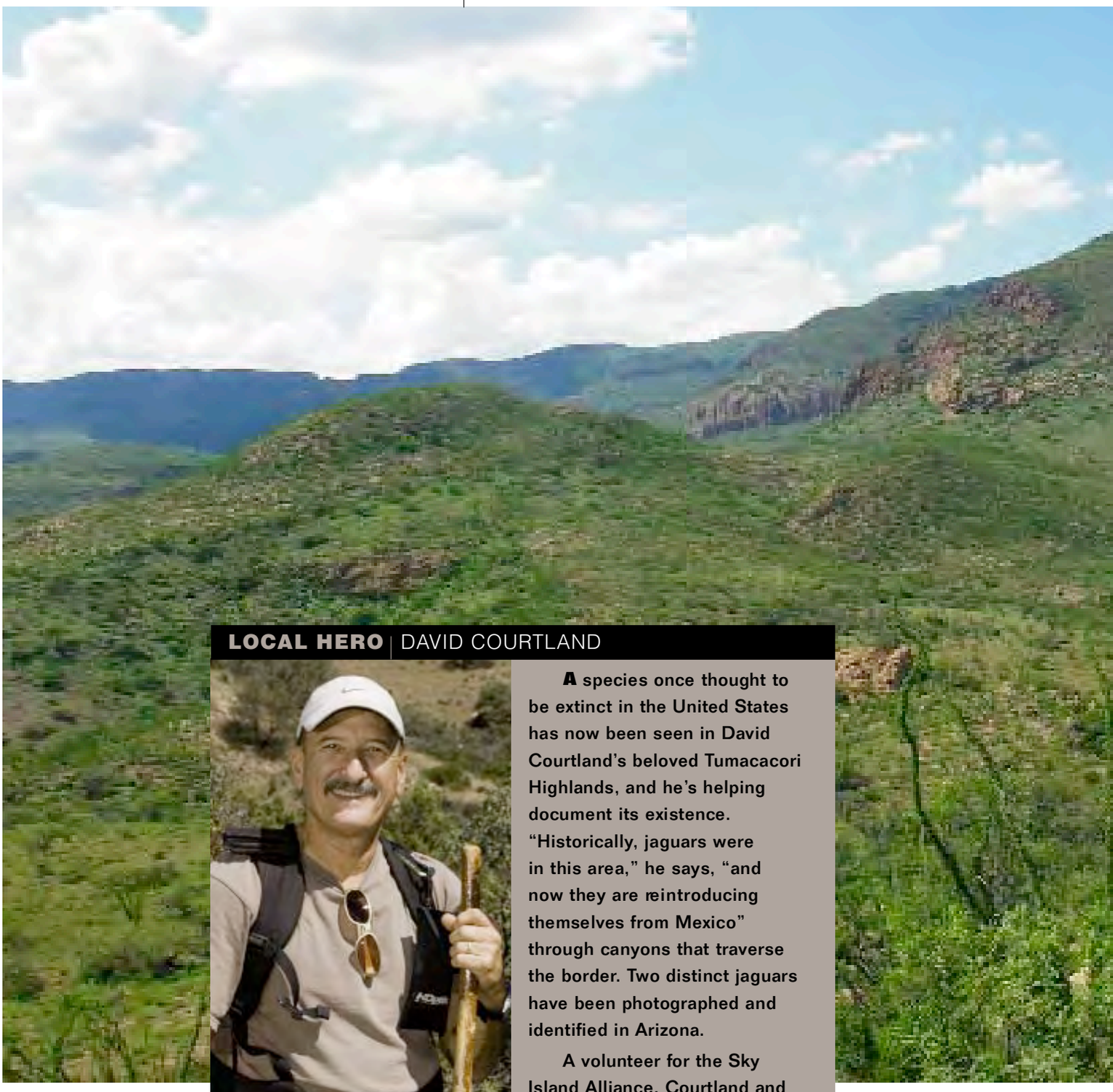
Activities like hiking and backpacking, whether in the pine-clad Chiricahuas, rose-colored Dragoons, or elsewhere in the region, are popular. The Arizona Trail, originating at the Mexican Border south of the Huachuca Mountains, also traverses the region.

PHOTO BY JEN SCHMIDT

Jutting out of the deserts and grassland plains of southeastern Arizona like forested mountain islands are the Tumacacoris, one of the "sky islands" mountain ranges that sweep up from northwestern Mexico and into southwestern New Mexico. The term "sky islands" denotes mountain ranges that are isolated from each other by intervening valleys of grassland or desert, making possible a diversity of species and habitat that is unique in North America.

The Tumacacoris harbor well over half the bird species of North America. The elegant trogon, gray hawk, buff-collared nightjar, and thick-billed parrot are just a small sample of the birds found here. Because of the Sky Islands' geographical location at the crossroads of the temperate and subtropical realms, the area is home to rare species like jaguars, coatis, and other tropically oriented mammals that are found nowhere else in the United States. Also inhabiting the Sky Islands are 29 bat species, more than 2,000 species of plants, and nearly 100 species of mammals — biological diversity beyond any other place in the country.

Large tracts of roadless and wilderness lands are essential to the survival of many of these spectacular species. The



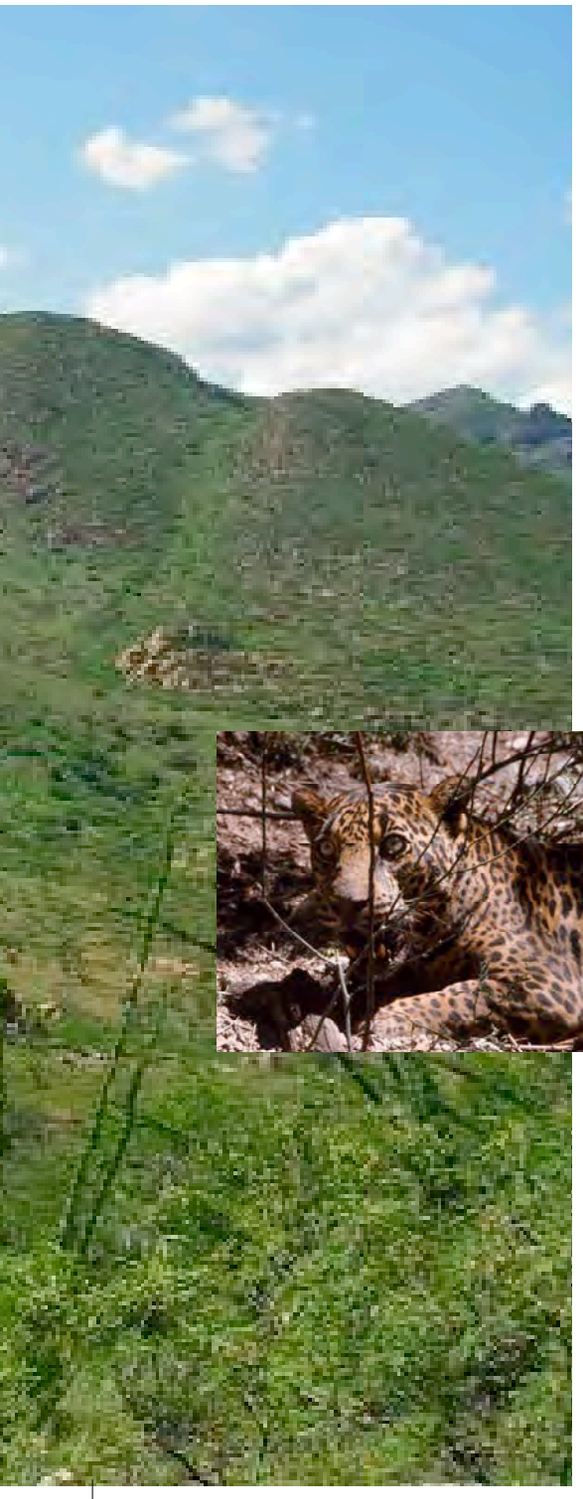
LOCAL HERO | DAVID COURTLAND

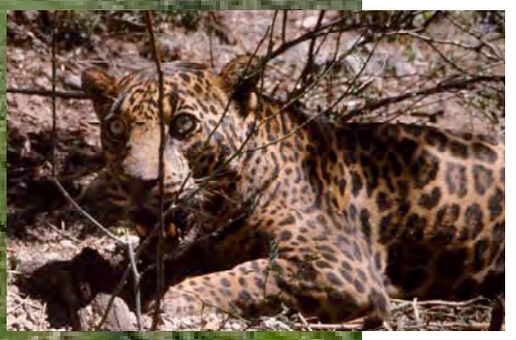
A species once thought to be extinct in the United States has now been seen in David Courtland's beloved Tumacacori Highlands, and he's helping document its existence. "Historically, jaguars were in this area," he says, "and now they are reintroducing themselves from Mexico" through canyons that traverse the border. Two distinct jaguars have been photographed and identified in Arizona.

A volunteer for the Sky Island Alliance, Courtland and others are helping wildlife biologist Sergio Avila set up remote cameras in ranches close to the Tumacacoris on the Mexican side of the border. To date, five pictures of ocelots have been taken 25 miles south of the international border. Ocelots have not been reported in Arizona since the 1960s.

Courtland taught high school in Nogales for 27 years, and has recently retired. His family has hiked and picnicked in the highlands for nearly 30 years, and he has led field trips to the area where students could learn about entomology, biology, and archeology.

"These are the prettiest canyons in southern Arizona," he says. "They are ideal for wilderness designation because they have been unaffected by development....Yet."





The jagged mountains and sweeping grasslands of the Tumacacoris are within an hour's drive of more than a million people. PHOTO BY MIKE QUIGLEY

INSET PHOTO BY SERGIO AVILA

valleys of this basin and range country act as barriers to the movement of certain woodland and forest species, somewhat like saltwater seas isolate plants and animals on oceanic islands. Other species, such as mountain lions and black bears, depend on movement corridors between mountain islands to maintain genetic diversity and population size.

So far, the area has not been affected by the heavy use characteristic of areas closer to Tucson, but it may be only a matter of time before the Sky Islands become a popular destination for off-road enthusiasts, whose numbers are increasing faster than the population as a whole. Experience in other areas of the state has shown that a small number of these off-road vehicle users behave irresponsibly by straying from the established routes, riding roughshod over sensitive lands, and causing damage in the form of habitat fragmentation and destruction.

Because the area's biodiversity is threatened by off-road vehicles and development, as well as climate change, fire suppression, and resource extraction practices, a coalition of southern Arizona residents has been working with Congressman Raul Grijalva to designate the Tumacacori Highlands as wilderness, so that it will receive the highest level of protection. Congressman Grijalva introduced the 84,000-acre Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Act in August 2007.

Sky Island Alliance, the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, and Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands have been conducting a public education campaign about the need to protect the roadless character and habitat of the Tumacacori Highlands. Discussions with community groups and other stakeholders highlight the value of the area and the need to engage in collaborative efforts within the framework of the forest planning process.

Elsewhere in Arizona, Sky Island Alliance and the Arizona Wilderness Coalition conduct road and biological surveys within the Coronado and Apache National Forests, assess other potential wilderness areas, and work to protect the region, so that the Sky Islands continue to be a place where people can find respite from the hustle and bustle of modern living while the rich diversity of wildlife remains largely unaffected by their presence.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Sky Island Alliance: www.skyislandalliance.org
Friends of the Tumacacori Highlands: www.tumacacoriwild.org
Arizona Wilderness Coalition: www.azwild.org

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS STEAKLEY

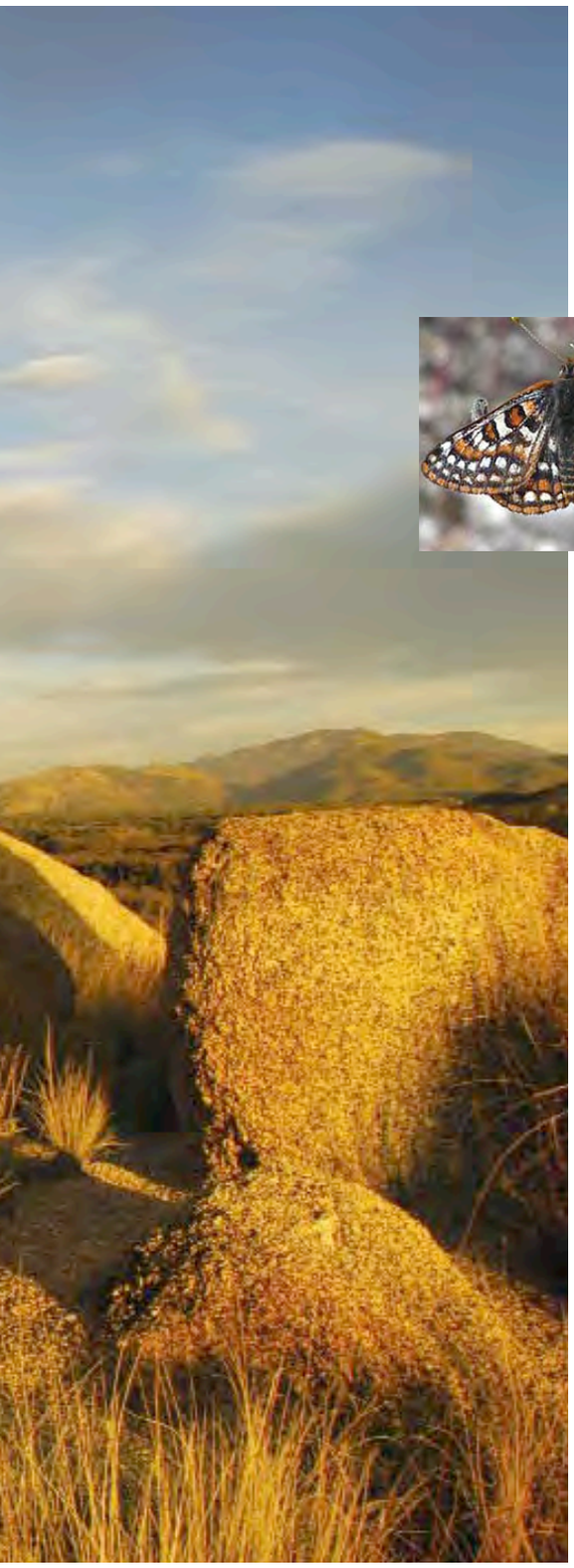
LOCAL HERO | PAM NELSON

The song says "you don't know what you've got, till it's gone," but Pam Nelson, native southern Californian, does know what was once there and is doing something to keep what's left.

"I have seen too many wild places disappear, along with the wildlife inhabiting them," says the retired high school teacher of science and math, who noticed the shrinking wilderness after returning to California after an 11-year absence. "Fragmentation and loss of corridors through which wildlife can move are causing the loss of what used to be California's natural habitats," she says.

Working with the California Wild Heritage Campaign, Nelson traveled to Washington, D.C., in 2006 to help convince the state's two senators that Beauty Mountain is a good area to protect. "There are very few large connected areas left in California," she says.

Nelson is helping set up meetings to educate local communities on the importance of wilderness in general and Beauty Mountain in particular. "Now that the connection between water quality and watershed protection is so apparent, people need to protect open areas out of sheer practicality."



INSET PHOTO BY DEBBIE LEONARD

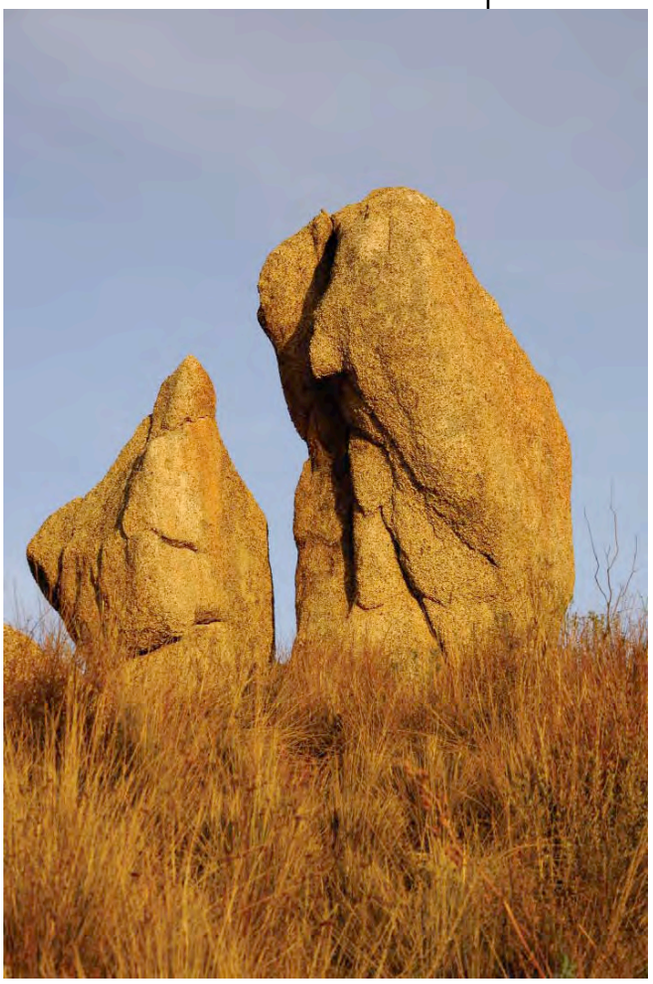
Several miles to the east of California's Palomar Mountain range, south of the Cahuilla Indian Reservation, and west of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park—nearly midway between the towns of Anza and Aguanga—lies the Beauty Mountain proposed wilderness. Strewn with boulders, some of which have weirdly twisted shapes formed by centuries of wind and rain, the area encompasses a series of steep mountains with elevations ranging from 3,300 to 5,548 feet, dominated by Iron Spring Mountain and Beauty Mountain itself. Chaparral, divided evenly between the California chaparral and coastal sage scrub communities, is abundant. On a warm spring day, the air is saturated with the smells of sage, manzanita, and California lilac. Hill after misty hill rises in the distance, presenting an unbroken view of wild country.

Beauty Mountain is home to numerous sensitive or endangered species, including the Quino checkerspot butterfly and native bunch grasses, as well as the more common mule deer, mountain lions, bobcats, and coyotes, badgers, and quail. Several sensitive animal and plant species have also been spotted in the proposed wilderness area or on nearby lands. They include the Dulzura pocket mouse, the Los Angeles pocket mouse, the northern red-diamond rattlesnake, the rosy boa, the California horned lark, the coastal California gnatcatcher, the prairie falcon, desert spike moss, Mojave tarplant, Otay manzanita, and the southern jewel flower.

These untrammeled wildlands provide incomparable opportunities for solitude and recreation. In winter, Beauty Mountain is a favorite destination for backpackers. A large equestrian community surrounds the area, making it a popular place for horseback riding.

Some say there is gold in these beautiful mountains, although the quantity of that precious metal is unknown. But the mere suggestion that gold and possibly other minerals are present poses a threat that grows right along with mineral prices in an uncertain economic climate. The moment the price is high enough to make mining in the area feasible, claims are likely to be staked—bringing with them the prospect of road construction with its attendant vehicle exhaust, noise, and destruction of fragile desert habitat.

BEAUTY MOUNTAIN | CALIFORNIA



An 1872 mining law stipulating that mining shall be the predominant use of public lands is responsible for hundreds of thousands of active mining claims across the West, and continues to threaten wild land.

PHOTOS BY DOUGLAS STEAKLEY

Since 2000, the California Wilderness Coalition, Friends of the River, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, the Campaign for America's Wilderness, and many local organizations have worked together to build local support for introduction and passage of the California Desert and Mountain Heritage Act. In addition to speaking with local business owners, civic and church groups, and elected officials to encourage them to pass resolutions to support protecting surrounding wild lands, the campaign has also reached out to user groups to bring them on board. Hundreds of people wrote letters to Representative Mary Bono Mack and many groups passed resolutions (all unanimous) in support of wilderness designation.

In late 2006, Representative Bono Mack introduced an initial draft of legislation to create three new wilderness areas and expand three others, designate four rivers as wild and scenic, and add two areas to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument.

In 2007, the California Desert and Mountain Wilderness Campaign continued to build public support for additional protections for Riverside County's special places. Later in the year, Representative Bono Mack and Senator Barbara Boxer introduced new legislation that expanded protection from the earlier draft. It added four more wilderness additions and one one new wilderness area. In total, it would protect 191,000 acres of wilderness, 8,000 acres of Monument additions and 31 miles of wild and scenic rivers.

Wilderness designation for Beauty Mountain will ensure that the only gold to be found in these hills is the infinitely more priceless hue that bathes the rock-strewn countryside at dawn and dusk.

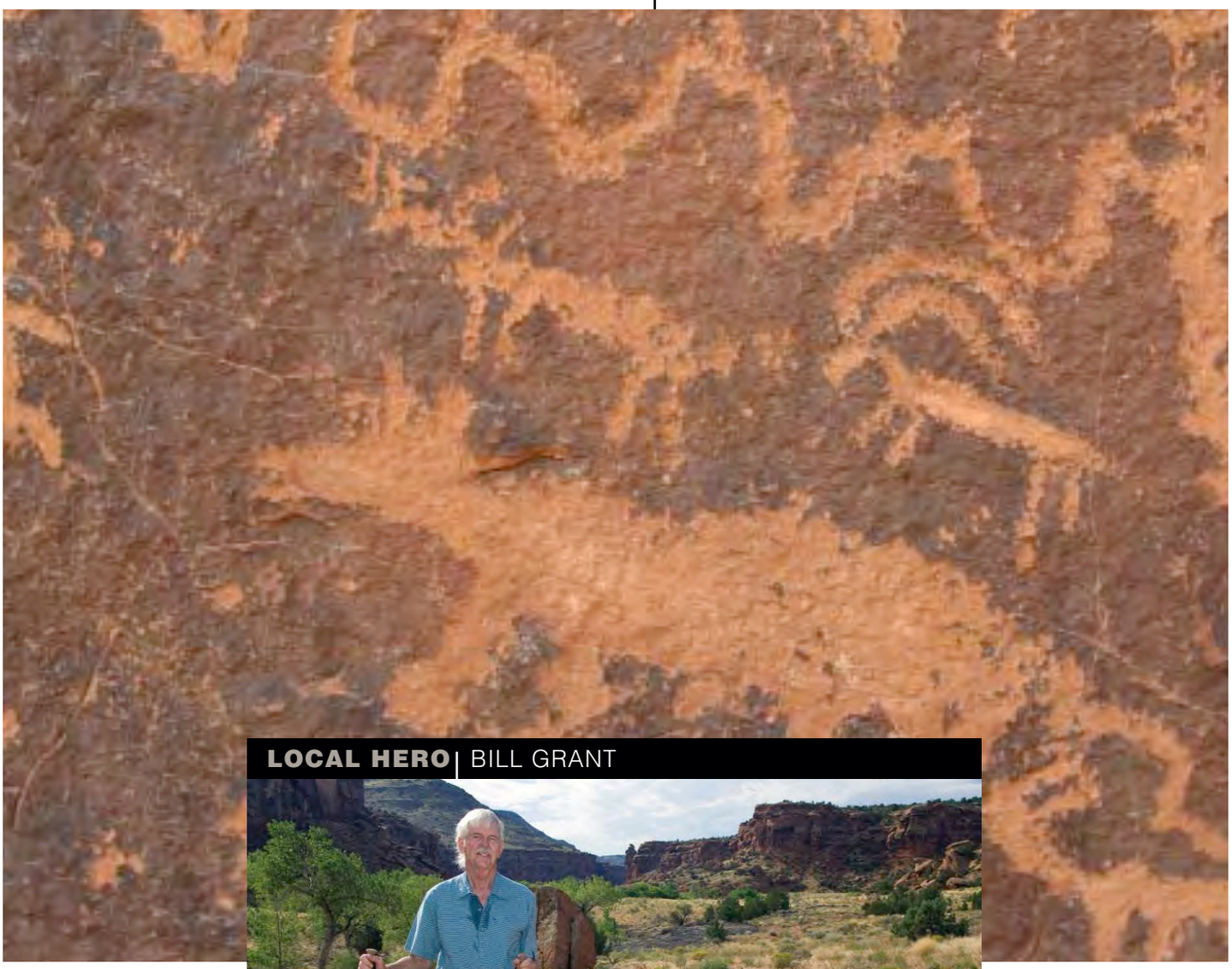
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
California Desert and Mountain Wilderness Campaign: www.desertmountainwild.org
California Wilderness Coalition: www.calwild.org

PHOTO BY MIKE MATZ

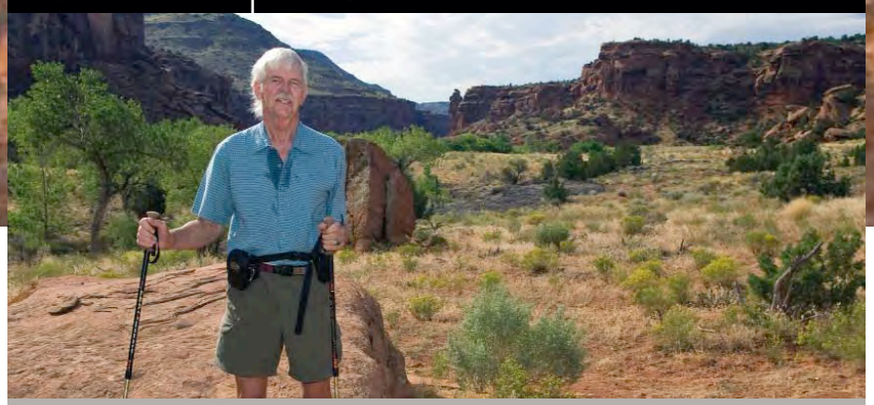
The journey to the Dominguez Wilderness Study Area entails hiking a mile-long trail from the road, crossing a bridge over the Gunnison River to reach the canyon entrance, and the effort is well worth it. A wide range in elevation hosts an amazing array of topographic and biologic diversity, including ecosystems as dissimilar as upper Sonoran desert along the Gunnison River, Douglas fir-aspen forest higher on the plateau, and perennial streams flowing through the two major canyon systems, Big and Little Dominguez Canyons.

Although the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for more than 8 million acres of federal lands in Colorado, in 1980 it designated only 801,000 acres as wilderness to be protected as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) until Congress decides whether to permanently protect them under the Wilderness Act. This area affords protection for the

GREATER DOMINGUEZ CANYON | COLORADO



LOCAL HERO | BILL GRANT



It would be easy to be consumed by the nuts and bolts of campaigning for wilderness designation, but Bill Grant has never lost sight of the big picture. The retired professor of American studies who specialized in the cultural history of the American West knows the area's history.

"Over 6,000 years ago, the ancient inhabitants of Dominguez Canyon left their traces in rock art on boulders and cliffs," he says. "Hiking there is, for me, a walk through time in which only the canyon itself remains constant."

As a member of the Western Colorado Congress, part of the Colorado Environmental Coalition, Grant has made presentations to community groups, met with elected officials and BLM representatives, written opinion pieces and letters, testified at public hearings, and initiated monitoring and trail maintenance work in the canyon.

"Dominguez Canyon is an important recreational resource for a rapidly expanding population," he says. "Without careful management and the protection provided by wilderness status, the fragile canyon ecology will deteriorate, archeological resources will be damaged, and a unique part of our natural and cultural heritage will be lost."

Dominguez watershed, which flows into the Gunnison and provides water to Mesa County. Until wilderness protection is granted to the Greater Dominguez Canyons area, its landscape and wildlife remain at risk from damage caused by motorized vehicles and growing pressure from the increasing human population.

To help protect the area from further damage, Coloradoans are working to convince Congress to add this special place to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The citizens' wilderness proposal for the Greater Dominguez Canyons area covers 136,000 acres of land ranging in elevation from 4,800 feet along the Gunnison River to 9,000 feet in the forest on the Uncompahgre Plateau. Within these bounds, one may travel across more than Colorado's beautiful open spaces. It is also a journey through time: more than 6,000 years of human habitation are evidenced by the abundance of ancient petroglyphs engraved on the high canyon walls by early inhabitants.

Since 1964, the Colorado Environmental Coalition and other conservation groups have succeeded in protecting close to 3.5 million acres of wilderness in Colorado. More recently, the coalition has gained the support of both Colorado senators and Representative John T. Salazar for legislation proposing a national conservation area that includes wilderness designation in the Greater Dominguez Canyons.

The wonder of the Dominguez Canyons area is that it is so near—just a few minutes' drive from Mesa County's 120,000 people—and yet seems so far from civilization. A sense of peaceful remove still pervades the canyons, in the rock carved like Swiss cheese, the hoof prints of bighorn sheep, in the feathery seed heads of wild clematis clinging to piñon trees, and the contrast between cactus and sagebrush desert surrounding lush canyons where birds twitter in the shade of cottonwoods. With help, the small corner of paradise found in the Greater Dominguez Canyons area will remain so for generations to come.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Colorado Environmental Coalition: www.ourcolorado.org
Western Colorado Congress: www.wccongress.org

The area contains culturally and historically significant ancient petroglyphs and also provides outstanding opportunities for fishing, hunting, hiking and other recreational activities. PHOTOS BY MIKE MATZ

LOCAL HERO | TOM POMEROY

If many of the problems besetting the country seem beyond the reach of ordinary people, Tom Pomeroy is not among them. For more than 30 years, he has supported wilderness designation for places like the Boulder-White Cloud Mountains in Idaho.

"It's not too late to do something right," he says, especially when it has been far too long since any wilderness has been protected in his state. "On a recent camping trip to the North Fork of the Big Lost River, which comes out of the Boulder-White Cloud proposed wilderness, I saw an illegal road going up a steep hillside in what is supposed to be a roadless area. It had not been there before." He notified the forest ranger.

Pomeroy is no stranger to making his views known, appearing along with a local Ketchum teacher in a print ad sponsored by the Idaho Conservation League and the Campaign for America's Wilderness advocating protection for his beloved Boulder-White Clouds. He has also written letters to the editor of Ketchum's local paper, urging wilderness designation for this special place.

"I make my living in construction," he says, "and I have spent my life enjoying the outdoors. History will show us that protecting these havens of solitude and isolation is the right thing to do."

PHOTO BY JOHN MCCARTHY

The birthplace of some of Idaho's best-loved rivers are in the Boulder-White Cloud Mountains in central Idaho. The white rock outcroppings on the mountain peaks resembled clouds to the settlers who named the range in the late 1800s. Snow pack from these mountains forms the headwaters of Idaho's famous "River of No Return," the Salmon River, as well as the Big Wood River, the North Fork of the Big Wood, the East Fork of the Salmon, and the North Fork of the Big Lost.

This stunningly rugged chain of mountains covers more than 500,000 acres. Located in central Idaho, about a two and a half-hour drive northeast of Boise, the area is the largest single unprotected national forest roadless area in the lower 48 states. Here are more than 150 peaks that exceed 10,000 feet, with the tallest, Castle Peak, reaching 11,800 feet. Glaciers carved the peaks and steep canyons in the White Clouds and also left beautiful basins with more than 100 lakes scattered throughout the range. The mountains are dotted with deep valleys leading to alpine lakes in glacial basins, surrounded by open meadows covered by wildflowers.

The highlands of the eastern White Clouds contain sweeping sagebrush hills over 9,000 feet with beautiful vistas, while the deep valleys provide outstanding wildlife habitat for elk, mule deer, black bears, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats. Rare predators like gray wolves and cougars occasionally make an appearance. This remote wilderness is also a nesting area for a wide variety of songbirds that migrate from the tropics and a home to northern goshawks and flammulated owls. The rivers sustain numerous fish, including brook, cutthroat, rainbow, and golden trout, and the endangered bull trout, the Arctic grayling, steelhead, and Chinook and sockeye salmon.

When a mining company proposed a large molybdenum mine at Castle Peak in the 1960s, the fragile nature of the Boulder-White Cloud Mountains became clear to citizens of Idaho. They fought back, successfully ensuring that mining did not proceed. Although the mining company still owns the mineral rights on Castle Peak, today the more immediate threat to the Boulder-White Clouds comes from a different source.

The Boulder-White Clouds are one of the most popular recreation destinations in Idaho. Although conservation groups have long urged their designation as wilderness, off-road vehicle users have mounted some opposition to these efforts, arguing they should be able to ride everywhere.

BOULDER-WHITE CLOUDS | IDAHO

In 1980, there were only 747 registered off-road vehicles in the entire state. By the end of 2005, that number had grown to 104,000, and is projected to increase by 10,000 every year. The signs of this rapid growth can be seen in too many wet meadows gouged by irresponsible dirt bikers blazing off-trail routes. Snowmobile use has also increased in some areas of this region.

The Idaho Conservation League is working with the people of Idaho to change things by seeking a balanced, locally driven plan to keep the Boulder-White Cloud mountains open for outdoor activities, while also protecting important winter habitat for deer and elk and ensuring clean water for trout, salmon, and people. By letting existing roads provide access to the heart of the wilderness, the proposal will ensure that dirt-bike riding, mountain biking, and snowmobile opportunities remain available in less sensitive areas outside the wilderness boundaries.

A bill introduced by Representative Mike Simpson to add Boulder-White Clouds to the federal wilderness system passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006, but Congress adjourned before the bill reached the Senate. Congressman Simpson reintroduced the bill on the first day of the 110th Congress, signaling his commitment to see this locally backed, consensus-driven legislation through.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Idaho Conservation League: www.wildidaho.org

Idaho has more wild areas than any other state in the lower 48, yet it has not been able to protect a single acre since 1980 when the Frank Church-River of No Return was designated a wilderness. This scenario is on the verge of changing and will be positive for all—the land, recreation users, and local economies. All the research done to date indicates that wilderness is an economic boon for communities closest to it.

PHOTOS BY LYNNE STONE

At the East Pioneers' higher elevations, steep rock faces, boulder fields, and talus slopes give way to forests of subalpine firs, whitebark pines, and grouse whortleberries. Stands of spruce reach up creek basins to the lower lake basins, and lodgepole pines are common below 8,600 feet. PHOTO BY RUSSELL O'LEARY

With their massive granite walls and towering mountain peaks reaching nearly 11,000 feet, the East Pioneer Mountains cover about 88,000 acres in the heart of southwest Montana, 20 miles southwest of Butte. Part of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, the largest national forest in the state, the East Pioneers were carved from the granite crest by centuries of glacial ice, remnants of which can be found in more than 30 high-elevation lakes.

Although the high elevation and relatively dry climate limit the number of plant and animal species that exist in the East Pioneers, the area is a haven for bighorn sheep, mule deer, black bears, and elk—all of which can be found along back-country trails. Mountain goats traverse the sheer granite walls, and pine martens, foxes, and wolverines also inhabit the area. The waters of mountain lakes harbor cutthroat, brook, golden, and rainbow trout, and rare arctic grayling.

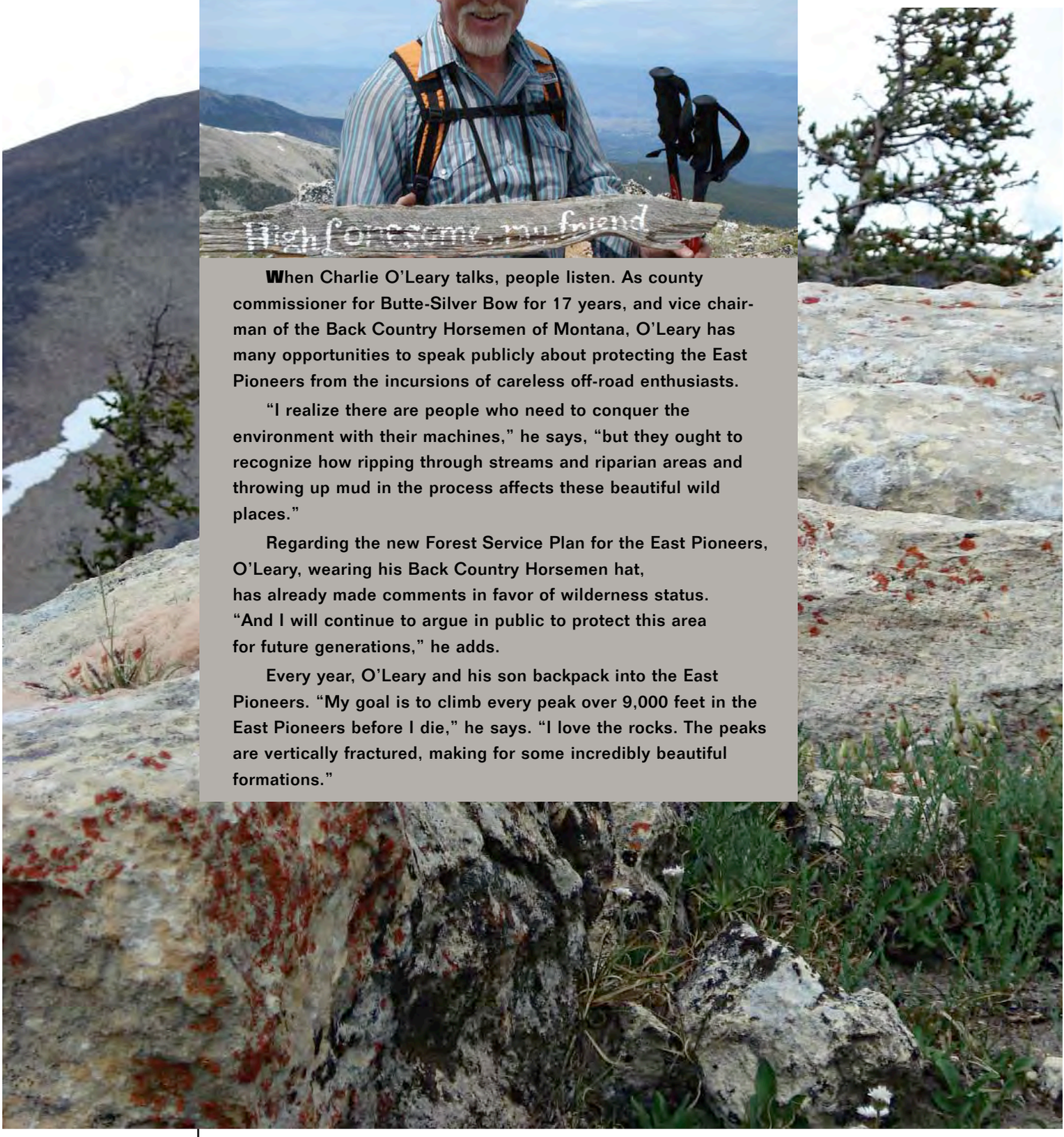
In 1992, a Montana wilderness bill that included protection

When Charlie O'Leary talks, people listen. As county commissioner for Butte-Silver Bow for 17 years, and vice chairman of the Back Country Horsemen of Montana, O'Leary has many opportunities to speak publicly about protecting the East Pioneers from the incursions of careless off-road enthusiasts.

"I realize there are people who need to conquer the environment with their machines," he says, "but they ought to recognize how ripping through streams and riparian areas and throwing up mud in the process affects these beautiful wild places."

Regarding the new Forest Service Plan for the East Pioneers, O'Leary, wearing his Back Country Horsemen hat, has already made comments in favor of wilderness status. "And I will continue to argue in public to protect this area for future generations," he adds.

Every year, O'Leary and his son backpack into the East Pioneers. "My goal is to climb every peak over 9,000 feet in the East Pioneers before I die," he says. "I love the rocks. The peaks are vertically fractured, making for some incredibly beautiful formations."



The topography and challenging terrain of the Pioneers make them an inviting destination for off-road vehicles. As in many parts of the mountainous West, the explosive growth of ATVs, motorbikes, and snowmobiles has brought with it rampant illegal use, and abuse of the fragile land. As new technology allows these machines to cut higher and deeper paths across the landscape, their unregulated presence poses ever greater threats to plants, animals, and undisturbed places. PHOTOS BY CHARLIE O'LEARY

for the East Pioneers passed both the House and Senate but was vetoed by President Reagan for political reasons. Fifteen years later, the largest national forest in the state, the East Pioneers region, was included in the area considered under a revised Forest Service land and resource management plan. Released in draft to the public in 2005, this plan met with opposition from conservationists and timber interests alike.

Wanting to find a better solution, the Montana Wilderness Association in 2006 joined with two statewide sportsmen's groups and five timber companies to create a new vision for managing the national forest. Under the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership Plan, more than 500,000 acres in 16 areas of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, including the East Pioneers, would be designated as wilderness. Montana's timber mills would be able to continue operating with a more secure supply of timber into the future with more than 700,000 acres in the forest made available for restoration forestry. Montana's hunting, fishing, and recreational tourism industry would continue to grow, while high densities of logging roads would be reduced. Fewer roads will help restore and protect fisheries in world-class trout streams like the Big Hole River, the Wise River, and Rock Creek. Vital watersheds that supply clean water to Butte and other nearby towns would also benefit.

Since the plan's release, members of the Partnership have been working to continue building broad public and private support for legislation to protect the East Pioneers. The Beaverhead-Deerlodge Partnership represents a new day in Montana—one that moves beyond decades-old conflicts among environmental interests, timber and livestock concerns, and recreational users—toward a common sense solution. Although the Partnership has asked the Forest Service to consider adopting the plan, a final decision is likely to rest with Congress. Elected officials at both the local and statewide level have endorsed the plan, which will help ensure local jobs, healthier forests, and reduced risk of wildfire danger while preserving Montana's backcountry traditions, including hunting, horseback riding, fishing, and others of Montana's cherished outdoor pursuits.

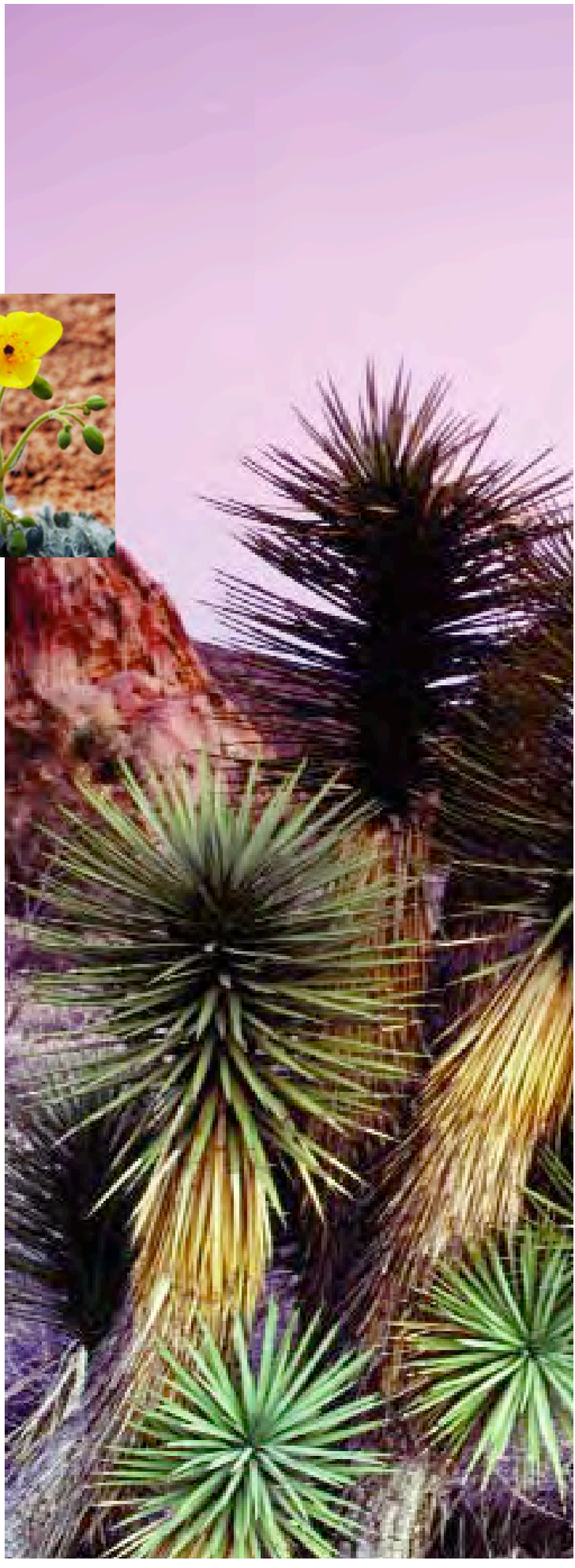
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Montana Wilderness Association:
www.wildmontana.org

No science fiction movie or video game can match the natural topography of the Gold Butte region of southern Nevada. Here are jagged limestone and basalt peaks reaching upward over 5,000 feet, jumbled granite boulder fields, and twisted sandstone sculptures in shades of pink, orange, red, and brown. Surrounded to the west and south by the Virgin River and Lake Mead, to the east by Arizona's Grand Canyon Parashant National Monument, and to the north by the remarkable Virgin Mountains, the Gold Butte region offers not only spectacular geology, but abundant wildlife and refreshing open space.

In addition to the protected desert tortoise, the area supports desert bighorn sheep, burrowing owls, desert iguanas, kit foxes and a stunning palette of wildflowers. Back country access to the shores of Lake Mead delights local birdwatchers with a variety of shorebirds, ducks, and bald eagles. The Gold Butte region is home to many sensitive plants and animals including the banded Gila monster, Las Vegas Bear Poppy, and Gold Butte Moss. The Virgin River is important habitat for the listed Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and a variety of endemic fish.

Native Americans have lived in the region for more than 6,000 years. The caves, petroglyph panels, and roasting pits they left behind are considered sacred by their present-day descendants.

The citizen's wilderness proposal for the 2002 Clark County Public Lands Bill included over 300,000 acres, but fewer than 28,000 acres in Gold Butte was designated as wilderness, and a similar amount was released from Wilderness Study Area management. This delicate desert ecosystem is now at risk from dirt bikers and other off-road vehicle enthusiasts who,



Local tribes have worked with the Bureau of Land Management to designate the region a Traditional Lifeway Area. Rich in pioneer history, Gold Butte was also a booming mining town. Remnants of prospecting, wagon trails, and cowboy camps can be found throughout the area. PHOTOS BY ANNE CARTER

LOCAL HEROES | ROY AND BETSY MILLER

Imagine a wild place needing security. But that's what Roy and Betsy Miller have been doing for the past three years as volunteers for various organizations, including the Nevada Wilderness Project.

"Gold Butte is being overrun with people who don't know what they are destroying," says Roy. "Our job is to oversee about 50 site stewards there who report any changes to historic and prehistoric resources caused by people, animals, or nature."

The Millers lived in Ohio until retiring in 2001. "Our goal for more years than I can remember was to move to the Southwest and spend the rest of our lives hiking and exploring," says Betsy.

What they have seen at Gold Butte is a shame: "We've reported human waste, paint balls, bullet holes, graffiti, and ATV and motorcycle tracks through the area," says Roy. "We want to preserve what's left of Gold Butte's natural beauty and historic and prehistoric treasures."

"Your children and grandchildren will thank us for doing so," adds Betsy.

GOLD BUTTE| NEVADA

TOP: **Ancient petroglyph panels are a dramatic reminder of the region's rich Native American culture.**

PHOTO BY KRISTIE CONNOLLY

MIDDLE: **Hikers can also find evidence of Gold Butte's life as a mining boom town during the first decade of the 1900s.**

PHOTO BY RON HUNTER

PHOTO BY WOODS WHEATCROFT

when straying from roads, destroy beautiful rock formations and sensitive wildlife habitat.

The Nevada Wilderness Project is part of a coalition, including Friends of Nevada Wilderness, that is spreading word of the need to travel gently through these wild areas. To help protect Gold Butte, the Wilderness Project is urging the BLM to safeguard identified wilderness quality lands; pull roads back from culturally sensitive areas, such as Native American middens and roasting pits; ensure that the roads do not fragment the habitat of desert tortoises; and refrain from adding routes that were not included in the original Wilderness Study Area inventory.

Southern Nevadans are fortunate to be surrounded by spectacular back country that can be visited whenever there is a desire to escape the pressures of modern life. The Nevada Wilderness Project hopes to protect 350,000 acres in the Gold Butte region so that the wilderness remains wild, and there is clean air and water for all the region's inhabitants.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Nevada Wilderness Project: www.wildnevada.org
Friends of Nevada Wilderness:
www.nevadawilderness.org

PHOTO BY NATHAN P. SMALL

Located just northwest of Las Cruces, the Sierra de Las Uvas and Broad Canyon country comprise awe-inspiring limestone and volcanic cliffs, mesas, buttes, caves and deep and rugged box canyons. This area is some of the wildest country left in the Rocky Mountain West. It also contains

important watershed values because the area's canyons—the most significant being Broad Canyon—direct rainfall to the Rio Grande.

Broad Canyon itself ranges from a dramatic gorge walled in by colorful cliffs to a meandering divide over one mile wide. The eastern portion of the area consists of lower-elevation hills, ridges, and drainages. Farther west toward the Sierra de Las Uvas mountains, mysterious lithic sites and petroglyphs can be found, the only markers of three different American Indian cultures. Springs and seeps in these mountains provide gem-like riparian areas for numerous wildlife, including golden eagles, peregrine falcons, mule deer, Montezuma quail, mountain lions, pronghorn antelope, bobcats, and coyotes.

Development pressures are mounting as the city of Las Cruces continues to grow. The population of Dona Aña County has increased by 160 percent over the last 40 years —a rate of growth higher than the average for New Mexico and the country as a whole. Although the city of Las Cruces voted to support the protection of the Broad Canyon country as wilderness, subdivisions are springing up closer and closer to the area. Another threat to these fragile desert ecosystems comes from ATVs, dirt bikes, dune buggies, and other off-road vehicles. Irresponsible use of these vehicles causes soil erosion, destroys plants, fills streams with sediment, raises dust levels in the atmosphere, adversely affects archeological sites, harms wildlife, and spreads invasive weeds.

The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, a nonprofit grass-roots group dedicated to the protection, restoration, and continued enjoyment of New Mexico's wild lands, has been working with a broad coalition of diverse interests to build support for protecting some of Dona Aña County's most special treasures, including Broad Canyon. The Alliance is currently working to convince the New Mexico delegation to introduce a citizens' proposal for protection of some 330,000 acres as wilderness and another 100,000 as a National Conservation Area around Las Cruces. Local businesses, numerous sportsmen's groups, and home-builders are backing the plan, which has the support of every community in the county.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance: www.nmwild.org

The historic Butterfield Trail passes through the lower country. Echoes from the 1800s when Apache warriors, the U.S. cavalry, and early settlers called the area home are just out of earshot on the lonely rock outcroppings looking out over hundreds of miles of grass and shrublands.

PHOTO BY NATHAN P. SMALL

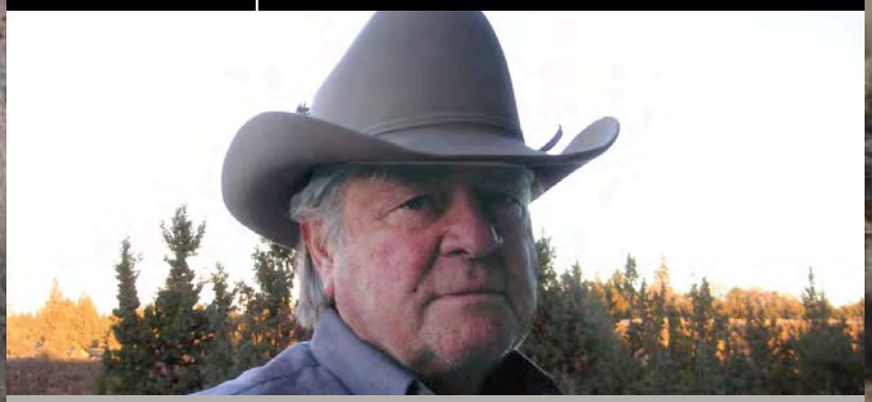
LOCAL HERO | DR. PAUL DEASON

In the campaign to secure wilderness designation for Broad Canyon, Paul Deason's portfolio runs the gamut from the Boy Scouts to high technology to law enforcement and the U.S. military. The retired Defense Department analyst, who has a doctorate in experimental statistics, became a member of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance in 1989. As a member of the High Tech Consortium of Southern New Mexico, Dr. Deason has worked to engage that important group in the campaign for protection of the area's special wild places, and its president appeared in an ad promoting wilderness designation for the vast open space surrounding Las Cruces.

Deason is working to persuade the law enforcement and the Border Patrol of the benefits that would accrue to them by closing off vehicular access to Broad Canyon. "The military is already on board regarding protecting several of the proposed areas," he says. "If the area were to become more developed—bringing with it households full of microwaves, cell phones, and other electronic equipment with the potential to disrupt R&D and training at nearby installations—the Army and NASA would have to reconsider their activities, which could negatively affect the local economy."

"What's really important is that Boy Scouts and others in generations to come have a chance to see the great diversity of Broad Canyon," he says. "It's magic."

LOCAL HERO | RAY CLARNO



Twenty years ago, when Oregon rancher Ray Clarno had a problem with off-road vehicles cutting through his fences, he turned to the Oregon Natural Desert Association for help.

"I was spending all my time mending fences," he says, "and some of my cattle were lost." Clarno promised the ONDA he would consider giving up his grazing permits on BLM land if the association would help him.

It took 15 years to persuade the BLM to close off the land to motorized vehicles, but when it happened, Clarno kept his promise. "I relinquished my grazing rights to BLM in 2006."

BLM has permanently retired the permits, which means that land that had been overgrazed in prior years and is currently suffering from Oregon's seven-year drought will now have a chance to recover.

"Wilderness is the only way to go for the Badlands," says Clarno, "They are too sensitive—too sandy—to handle off-road vehicles. If we don't have controls, this beautiful place will end up being loved to death."

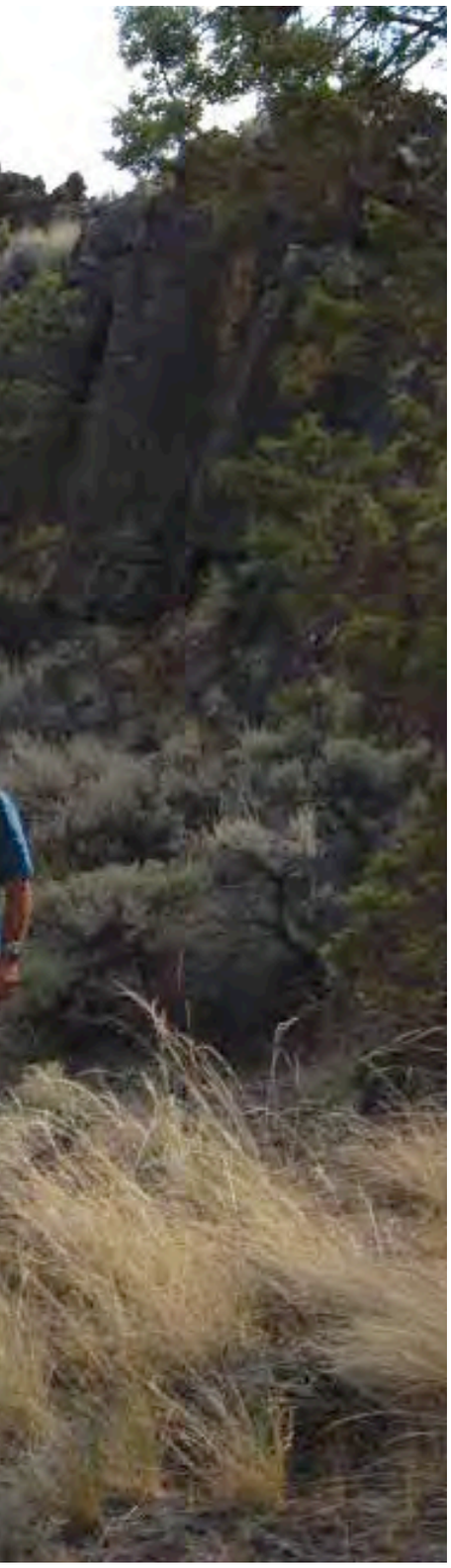


PHOTO BY MIKE STAHLBERG

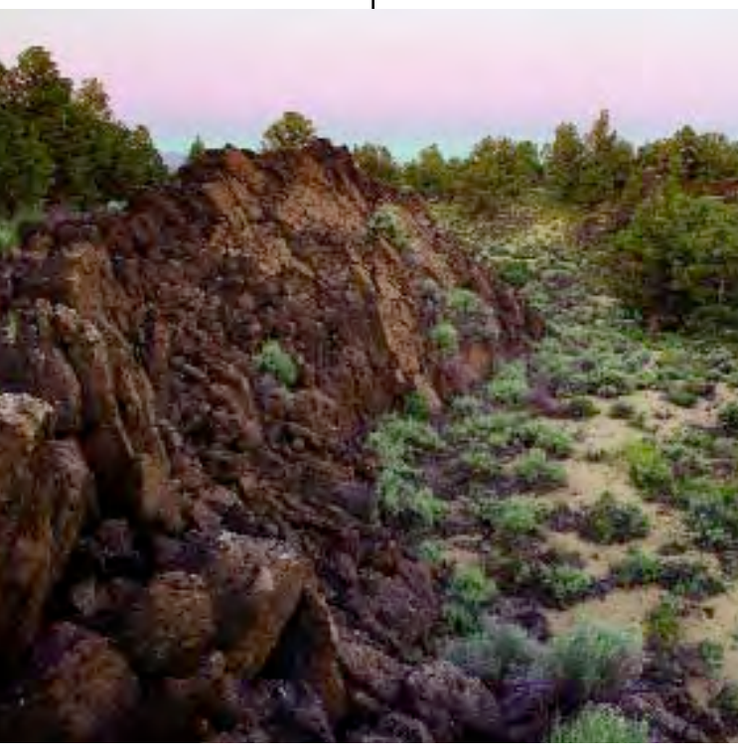
Sometimes it's simply not possible to tame a wilderness. Early pioneers to the high desert country east of what is now Bend, Oregon, found the lava-based terrain so harsh that they could not traverse it by wagon, nor was it useful for farming or grazing livestock. They named this eerily beautiful region the Badlands.

Some 80,000 years ago, lava flowed slowly out of a basaltic vent associated with the Newberry volcano onto the surrounding terrain. The outer layer cooled while it moved, and the inner lava pushed up the cooled lava to form pressure ridges like Badlands Rock and Flatiron Rock. In springtime, delicate desert blooms, including yellow Oregon sunshine, dwarf purple monkeyflowers, sulfur buckwheat, Indian paintbrush, and mariposa lilies emerge from the sandy soil, which is made up of windblown volcanic ash and eroded lava. Castle-like rock formations at elevations of 3,000 to nearly 4,000 feet, interspersed with dry river canyons, protect juniper trees from wildfires, thereby making it possible for the trees to survive more than a thousand years. The Badlands are home to some of the longest-living trees in Oregon, some more than one thousand years old.

Two-thirds of Oregon is desert. Native vegetation in the Badlands has had to adapt to an average annual rainfall of less than 12 inches. Shrubs that can sustain these dry conditions include big sagebrush and rabbitbrush, and the predominant bunchgrasses are Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass. The high desert supports a remarkable diversity of plant and animal species, many of which are unique, rare, and endangered. Prairie falcons and golden eagles nest in the Dry River Canyon and on Badlands Rock. Black-tailed jackrabbits, mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, bobcats, marmots, cottontail rabbits, coyotes, snakes, and six species of lizards inhabit the region. In addition to prairie falcons, there are more than 100 species of birds, including the sage grouse, which may nest in the area and is a candidate for listing as an endangered species.

Although the Badlands remain untamable, the area is being damaged by off-road vehicles, defaced pictographs, illegally cut ancient junipers, and illegally dumped trash. Wilderness protection, with its permanent prohibition on motorized vehicle use, would largely eliminate the major threats to the area.

BADLANDS | OREGON



PHOTOS BY GREG BURKE

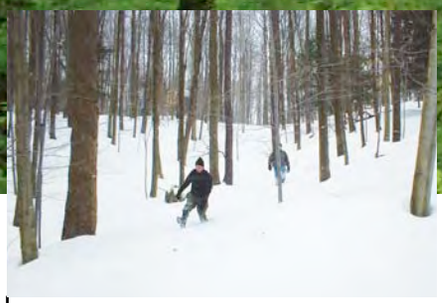
In 1980, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) designated the Badlands a Wilderness Study Area (WSA). In its 1991 statewide Wilderness Study Report, the BLM recommended that the Badlands be designated as wilderness, but Congress has yet to decide the issue. Meanwhile, to provide non-motorized recreation opportunities, protect natural resources, and minimize user conflicts, in 2005 the BLM created a management plan that closed the Badlands to motorized vehicle travel and limited mechanized travel (mountain bikes and the like) to designated routes. The plan also bans tree-cutting, paintball guns, and the discharge of firearms other than for legal hunting.

Included in the plan is a policy that allows ranchers to voluntarily relinquish their grazing permits. This innovative process was established by the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA), which worked with local ranchers and the BLM to help resolve conservation and grazing issues on fragile BLM lands. The association is also working with local landowners to recommend land exchanges that would swap private land inholdings inside the Badlands Wilderness Study Area with BLM land in order to consolidate land ownership.

A 2007 report by Headwaters Economics, an independent research group that works to improve land management decisions in the West, found that wilderness designation for the Badlands could help boost central Oregon's economy through job and income growth and a higher quality of life. Not surprisingly, some 200 local businesses support the plan to protect this special place. ONDA's ultimate goal is to achieve permanent wilderness designation for the area so that its unique natural qualities remain untamed and untrammeled by the march of civilization.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Oregon Natural Desert Association: www.onda.org



Hiking through the lush greenery of the Allegheny in the spring or summer, the spectacular fall foliage, or across snowy trails in the winter, this special place offers a place to reconnect with nature.

PHOTO BY TESSA CAMPBELL

INSET BY KIRK JOHNSON

Tucked away at the northern end of Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest, the 5,000 acres known as Chestnut Ridge remind visitors of the vast wilderness that once cloaked the Eastern United States and included among its forests more than 2 billion American chestnut trees. In the early 20th century, a fungus accidentally introduced on imported Asiatic chestnut trees infected mature American chestnuts, and by 1940 one of America's most beloved trees had become nearly wiped out. Thanks to its remote location, Chestnut Ridge, one of the few remaining roadless areas left in the Allegheny, shows promise of being a good candidate for eventual recovery of the American chestnut.

LOCAL HERO | ROGER KNACKE

Physicists have a better understanding of time than do the rest of us. For Roger Knacke (left), professor of physics and astronomy at the Erie campus of Penn State University, time may be running out for keeping Chestnut Ridge roadless. On a recent hike into the interior of the area, Knacke and his companions noticed survey flags marking an area of possible interest for oil and gas drilling.

"I knew from my long association with Friends of Allegheny Wilderness that this beautiful area should be preserved as wilderness," he says. "It may be one of the few places left in the East where the American chestnut has a chance to survive."

Knacke has made his views known in more than one letter to the Forest Service, urging the agency to preserve more than it is presently proposing. He has also written to members of Pennsylvania's Congressional delegation. "I think protecting the 12 percent of this vast forest as outlined in our Citizens' Wilderness Proposal would bring real balance to the management of the Allegheny and wouldn't hurt the timber industry at all," he says.

What would hurt, he notes, is to allow exploitation of such a special place that can only be summed up in two words: "It's beautiful."

Chestnut Ridge, which protects the watersheds of six surrounding creeks and brooks, provides important habitat for bald eagles, black bears, coyotes, white-tailed deer, blackburnian warblers, goshawks, fishers, and river otters. One bird species making its home here is the cerulean warbler, a neotropical migrant songbird that has been recommended for listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Threatened or endangered species inhabiting the Allegheny include the Indiana bat, small-whorled pogonia, and clubshell and northern riffleshell mussels.

The Allegheny, Pennsylvania's only national forest, is located in the densely populated eastern United States, two miles south of the New York state line and within a day's drive of large urban centers like Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C.

The 1975 Eastern Wilderness Areas Act recognized that "In the more populous eastern half of the United States there is an urgent need to identify, study, designate, and preserve areas for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System." More than 30,000 acres of Allegheny National Forest wilderness were originally proposed in the Senate version of this legislation, but, unfortunately, none was included in the final version of the bill.

Although logging has been an issue in the past, the major threat to Chestnut Ridge today is oil and gas development. Approximately 93 percent of all mineral rights underlying the Allegheny National Forest are privately owned. Regardless of who owns the surface land, mineral rights owners are legally permitted to develop their holdings for oil and gas production. If the area is not protected soon, it is anticipated that dozens of new wells could be drilled over the next several years, utterly destroying the area's remote, roadless character. Other threats to Chestnut Ridge include frequent illegal use of off-road vehicles like ATVs and snowmobiles, which mar the land, damage wildlife habitat, and break the quiet of the place.

For more than six years, Friends of Allegheny Wilderness has been advocating for the protection of Chestnut Ridge. In 2003, the nonprofit group formally proposed the area for wilderness protection under the Wilderness Act of 1964 in a Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest. As a direct result of the Friends' advocacy, the Forest Service recognized Chestnut Ridge as a potential wilderness area in its revised Forest Plan, published in March 2007.

Only Congress can designate Chestnut Ridge as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, by passing a law. It is now in the hands of Pennsylvanians to let their congressional representatives know that Chestnut Ridge should be permanently protected in its natural condition for future generations to use and enjoy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Friends of Allegheny Wilderness: www.pawild.org

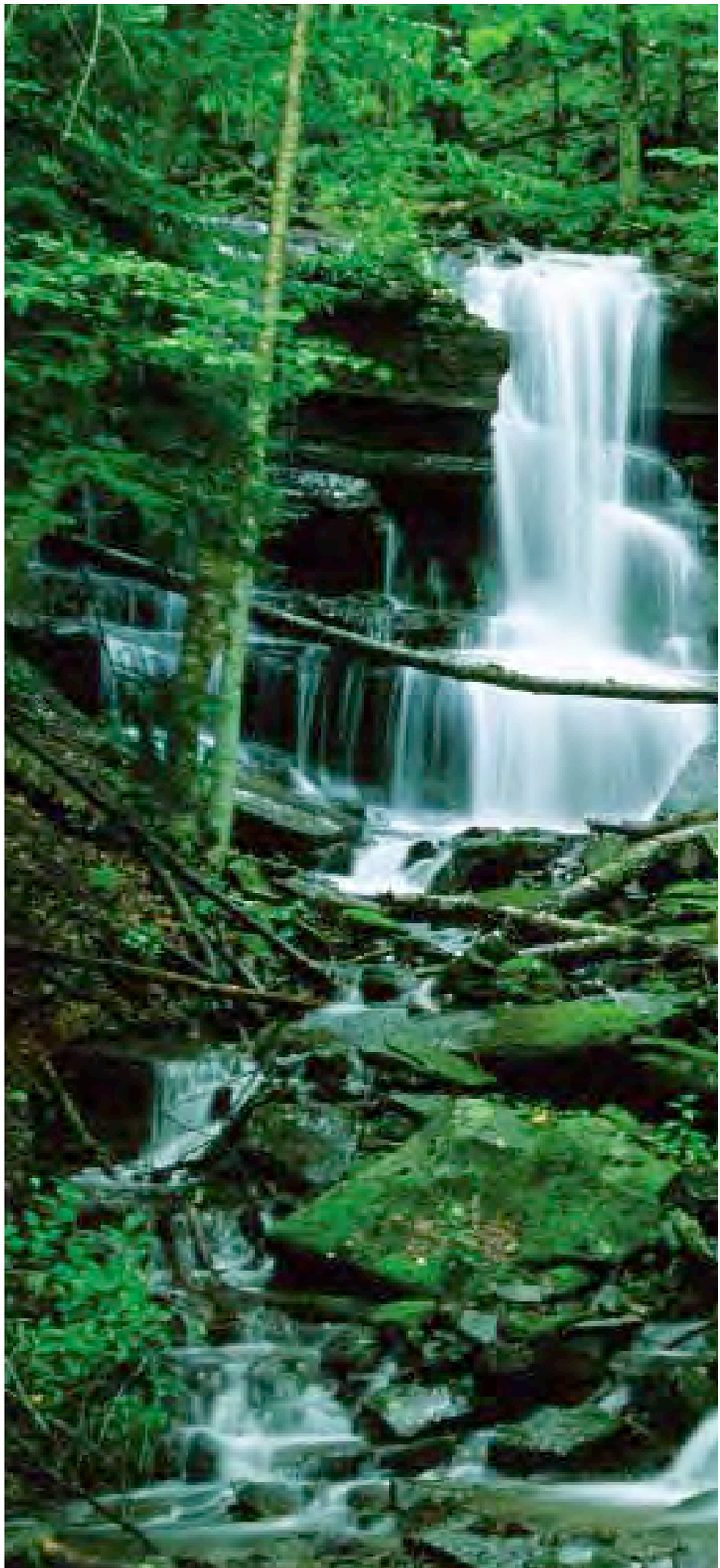
Leaves of the American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) turn a brilliant yellow in the fall. PHOTOS BY KIRK JOHNSON

In West Virginia's wild and wonderful mountains, midway between the towns of Elkins and Franklin and deep within the Monongahela National Forest, lies Seneca Creek, surging northward through a wild, green, alpine landscape unbroken by roads. The 'Mon', as it's know locally, is often referred to as the "Birthplace of Rivers" for the number of the East's greatest waterways that originate here, including the Potomac and the Monongahela whose headwaters originate in the Seneca Creek proposed wilderness.

These 24,000 acres of contiguous Forest Service land have some of the most diverse mixed hardwood forests on Earth. At nearly 5,000 feet on Spruce Knob are red spruce, balsam fir, and mountain ash. Numerous waterfalls tumble through the gorge section of the forested valley of Seneca Creek, which drops approximately 1,400 feet in elevation or nearly 150 feet per mile. One of them, the Upper Falls of Seneca Creek, is a 30-foot cataract that drops into a deep, clear pool.

The area contains some 600 species of plants, including wild blueberries, and reindeer and sphagnum mosses. Snowshoe hares and the fungi-eating West Virginia northern flying squirrel, now on the federal endangered species list, thrive in the unbroken, high-altitude evergreen forest in the eastern portion of Seneca Creek. Other wildlife living in the area include black bears, bobcats, ruffed grouse, whitetail deer, raccoons, foxes, wild turkeys, and a wide variety of migratory song birds.

Like other special places in the Monongahela, Seneca Creek is threatened by oil and gas development. Testing is already occurring on its northern edge. But West Virginia has already suffered the consequences of what can go wrong in the absence of legal protection. Turn-of-the-century clear-cutting stripped the state of all but a



Seneca Creek itself is one of three West Virginia waterways considered to be among America's 100 Best Trout Streams. More than 250 fish and wildlife species make their homes here, including a self-sustaining population of native eastern brook trout. The creek is also one of only a few West Virginia streams in which rainbow trout successfully spawn. PHOTO BY JONATHAN JESSUP

LOCAL HERO | MARY WIMMER

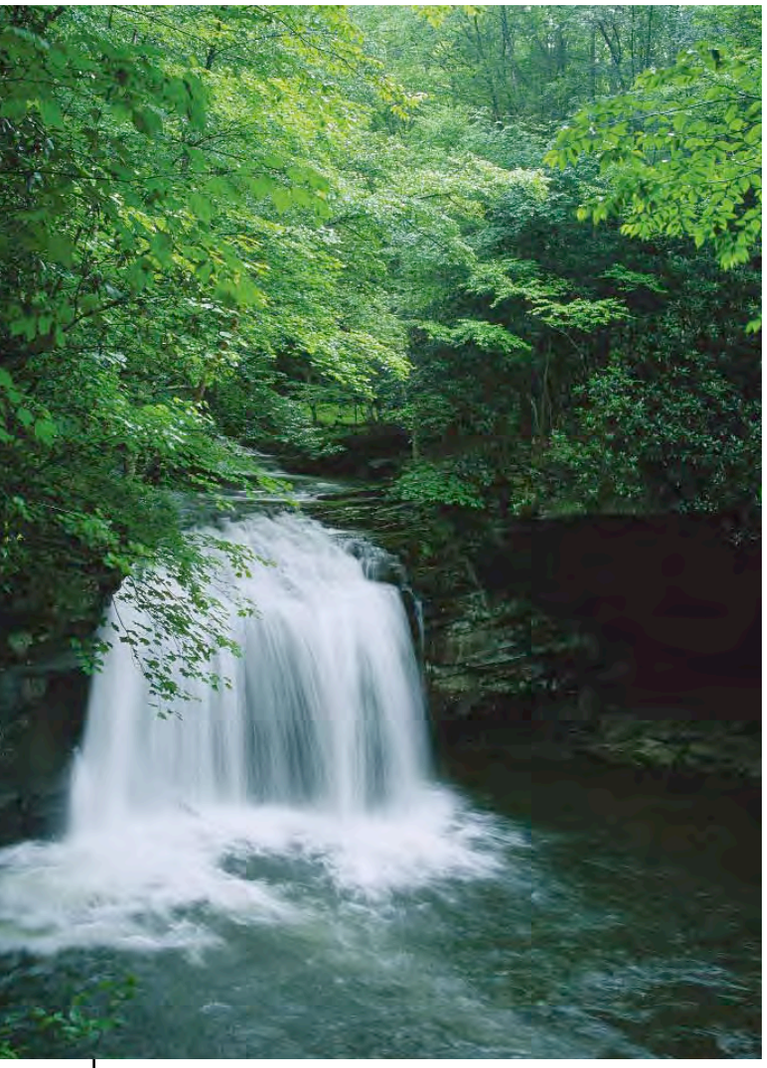
Mary Wimmer (left) has a tried-and-true prescription for people overwhelmed by the stress of modern living: Spend time in the wilderness. She discovered this remedy on her first backpacking trip to Seneca Creek in the mid-1980s.

"The solitude, tranquility, and scenic beauty offered here are the best forms of stress relief and reconnection with nature that I know," says the professor of biochemistry at West Virginia University's School of Medicine.

In 1984, as a member of the newly formed West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club, Wimmer helped develop a provision for the Monongahela Forest plan that prevented road-building and logging in remote areas. "This became my passion," she says, "to see that special areas like Seneca Creek were put into that kind of management until they could be permanently protected as wilderness."

In 2001, Wimmer helped establish the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition and chairs its steering committee. "For all the time I have devoted to it over the years," she says, "no proposed wilderness area is as important to me personally as Seneca Creek."

SENECA CREEK | WEST VIRGINIA



Seneca Creek is one of the East's largest remaining public roadless areas not yet protected by addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. In fact, of the 919,000 acres in the Monongahela National Forest, only 78,000 acres, or less than 9 percent, are part of the system.

PHOTOS BY JONATHAN JESSUP

few hundred acres of virgin forest. In 1920, the U.S. Forest Service acquired the Seneca Creek land, then in the early stages of rebounding from the clear-cutting.

Despite overwhelming public sentiment to designate Seneca Creek as a wilderness, in 2006, the Forest Service removed a large portion of the proposed wilderness area out of protective management, thereby further opening the door to energy development, logging, and road-building. The agency advocates designating only three new wilderness areas and expand an existing one—totaling a mere 27,700 acres altogether. Meanwhile, the development and suburban sprawl currently taking place in West Virginia threatens both federal and nonfederal forests, increases the hazard of serious flooding, and worsens air pollution.

As excessive logging and development forces diminish important natural values in the nonfederal forests surrounding Seneca Creek, protecting the area grows ever more critical. For the past six years, the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition has worked to build broad local support for its proposal to designate 15 remote tracts of the Monongahela as wilderness, including Seneca Creek, winning the backing of business owners, members of the faith community, sportsmen, conservationists, recreationists, local elected officials, and others who want to ensure that some of this forest can be passed down to future generations.

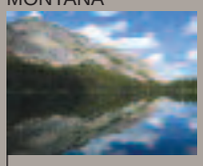
In January, West Virginia Congressman Nick Rahall, Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, with support from the entire bipartisan West Virginia congressional delegation, introduced a bill to protect 47,000 acres of the forest as wilderness, expanding three existing areas, and creating four new wilderness areas. Although Seneca Creek was not included in the original bill, the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition is continuing to work with the Congressional delegation to try to win protection for this special place.

Designation of wilderness on national forests protect things Americans value in a wild place: solitude and a chance to become closer to nature, and to marvel at the timelessness of old-growth forests and the presence of critical habitats that have largely disappeared from other forested lands. Wilderness designation provides permanent protection for these important values.

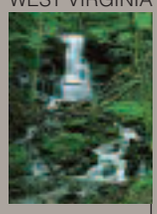
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
West Virginia Wilderness Coalition: www.wvwild.org

BOULDER WHITE-CLOUDS
IDAHO

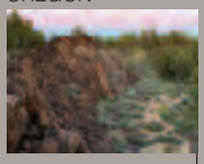
EAST PIONEERS
MONTANA



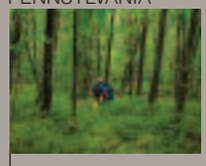
SENECA CREEK
WEST VIRGINIA



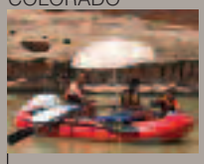
BADLANDS
OREGON

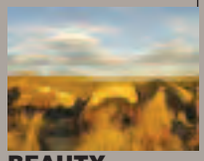


CHESTNUT RIDGE
PENNSYLVANIA

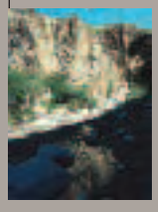


GREATER DOMINGUEZ CANYON
COLORADO

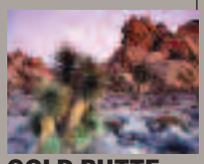




BEAUTY MOUNTAIN
CALIFORNIA



BROAD CANYON
NEW MEXICO



GOLD BUTTE
NEVADA

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The Campaign for America's Wilderness works with grassroots wilderness advocates and state coalitions to protect the nation's last best wild places for future generations by adding them to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Contact us at (202) 544-3691 or visit www.leaveitwild.org.

COVER PHOTOS (clockwise):
Charlie O'Leary, Charlie O'Leary, Stephen Capra, Ron Hunter

BACK COVER PHOTOS (clockwise):
Nathan P. Small, Mike Stahlberg, Kirk Johnson, Charlie O'Leary

WILDERNESS HERO PHOTOS:
David Courtland (AZ)
Thomas Veneklasen
Pam Nelson (CA)
Jim Mathews
Bill Grant (CO)
Todd Patrick
Tom Pomeroy (ID)
Todd Kaplan
Charlie O'Leary (MT)
Russell O'Leary
Roy and Betsy Miller (NV)
The Miller Family
Dr. Paul Deason (NM)
Rev. Teresa Heupel
Ray Clarno (OR)
Bev Clarno
Roger Knacke (PA)
Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
Mary Wimmer (WV)
Jim Solley

COPY WRITER:
Caroline Taylor
EDITOR:
Susan Whitmore
DESIGN:
Easton Design Group
Salt Lake City, Utah

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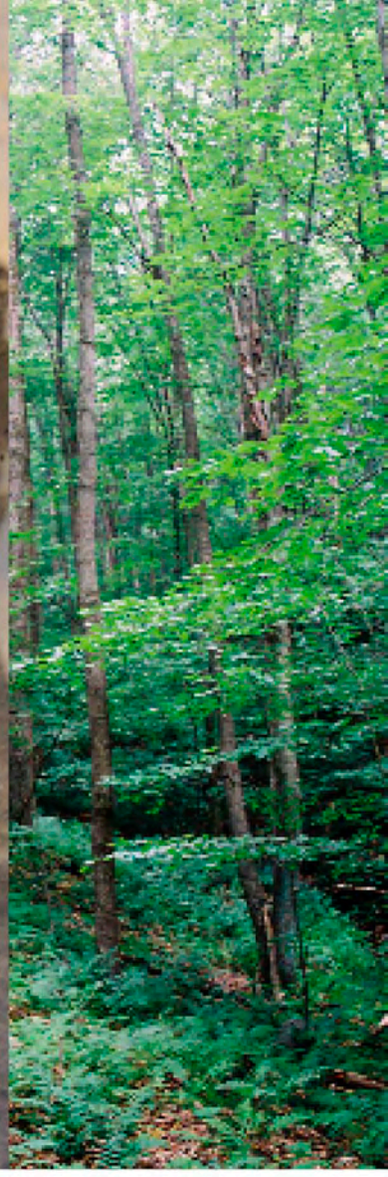

CAMPAIGN
for AMERICA'S WILDERNESS

122 C Street, NW, Suite 240
Washington, DC 20001
Tel 202.544.3691
www.leaveitwild.org

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