

While jaguars explore Arizona's wild lands, the brittlebush begins to bloom, and we celebrate a month of women and science. This is a great month to join us in the wild outdoors, and support our persistent effort to preserve Wilderness!

Support AWC



March 21, 2017

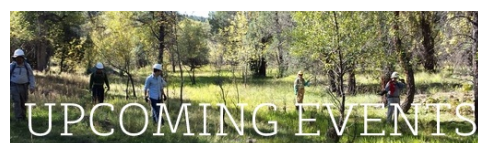
Greetings!

Barbara asked me to write you a guest introduction for this particular monthly e-news of the Arizona Wilderness Coalition, where we celebrate jaguars, women, science, and spring renewal. It was March 2008, many years ago, when I first became involved in jaguar monitoring as a young woman scientist, and saw my very first jaguar tracks, deep in the oak woodland canyons and sycamore-lined riparian creek beds of the Sierra Azul Mountains in Sonora.

Even then, Wilderness advocacy was a large part of my passion and work to protect jaguars and biodiversity in the Sky Islands. The proposed Tumaacori Highlands Wilderness still holds a significant place in my heart, as do many **other wild places** where jaguars choose to roam. The work isn't easy. It takes a tribe of people standing together: scientists, landowners, volunteers, advocates, and you.

I'm marking my calendar for **Arizona Gives Day on April 4th**. I encourage you to join me in supporting this wonderful organization, whose impact has the persistence of women and jaguars, moving one step at a time, upward and northward.

Together for the wild,





*J. Moreno*  
Jessica Moreno  
Wildlife Biologist



## Celebrate Women's History Month - the Wild Way

*"To protect what is wild is to protect what is gentle. Perhaps the wilderness we fear is the pause between our own heartbeats, the silent space that says we live only by grace. Wilderness lives by this same grace. Wild mercy is in our hands."*

- Terry Tempest Williams

Women have worked in the shadows of every great wilderness campaign since the idea took shape in American minds over a century ago. While their male counterparts might be better recognized, women have historically been fundamental to the wilderness movement and are increasingly the champions of wilderness victories at every scale. [Read about a few of these incredible women here.](#)

You can also read about these [9 women you probably never heard of who made conservation history.](#)

And no review of women's contributions to wilderness would be complete without recognizing Shelley Silbert and the [Great Old Broads for Wilderness!](#)

[Read More](#)



## March Declared as the "Month of Science" in Tucson, Arizona

Tucson Mayor Jonathan Rothschild declared March the "Month of Science," a good reminder that effective wilderness designation and conservation action are founded in science. AWC's volunteers serve as citizen scientists when we inventory areas for wilderness characteristics, document the effects of our restoration work, and share growing evidence that Wilderness benefits people and wildlife alike.

"As March is proclaimed as the "Month of Science" in our community, I would like to challenge all of us to become citizen scientists. In doing so, we promise to look at data objectively before predetermining what we are hoping it will prove. And we commit to examining our sources to ensure they are objective before using them to form any conclusions or arguments. This has been the source of power for science for centuries. Perhaps it may now become the source of strength for our society." - Dr. Kathleen Bethel,



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## New Jaguar is a Testament to the Importance of Wilderness

The appearance of a new jaguar in the Dos Cabezas Mountains, the third jaguar to appear in southern Arizona in less than two years, illustrates the importance of wild areas, open space corridors, and Wilderness, for Threatened and Endangered Species and wide-ranging carnivores. The Dos Cabezas Mountains contain over 11,000 acres of Bureau of Land

Management (BLM) Wilderness, and [AWC's team has found additional "Lands with Wilderness Characteristics" in this mountain range](#). "BLM managed public lands in the vicinity of the Dos Cabezas Mountains provide an important wildlife corridor and landscape linkage to the northern end of the Chiricahua Mountains," said BLM Safford Field Office Manager Scott Cooke.

Since 1996, jaguars have lived around Wilderness and proposed Wilderness areas throughout southern Arizona, such as the Whetstone, Huachuca, Santa Rita, Tumacacori Highland, Baboquivori, and Peloncillo Mountains. This is no coincidence. Jaguars, the largest wild cat in North America, are indicators of healthy, wild landscapes. Where a jaguar lives, nature is at its best. The recent increase in jaguar sightings in and near Wilderness-quality lands is an exciting testament - and reminder - of the importance of Wilderness protection.

- > [Read more about wilderness-worthy lands in the Dos Cabezas](#)
- > [New Jaguar Sighting in the News](#)
- > Read the blog, [Northern Jaguars: Over A Decade of Field Observations in the Mexico-US Borderlands](#), by Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum biologist Sergio Avila
- > Learn more about [Jaguar Critical Habitat and Recovery](#)

[Learn More](#)





## Changing Times at the BLM

As expected, considerable change is underway for policies and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The purview of BLM is immensely important, covering 245 million acres of public lands, and 700 million acres of subsurface mineral rights (oil, gas, coal and more). The new Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, **has stated** he plans considerable organizational change. On the positive side, Secretary Zinke supports

retaining federal lands in national ownership, and funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Budgets for the Department of the Interior and BLM are proposed to be cut by 10%, which could be devastating to an agency with already constrained funds for managing vast tracts of our nation's lands and natural resources. Of considerable concern for conservation interests are multiple statements from Congress and the new Administration that resource extraction is slated to increase, while environmental protections will be reduced. One hard-won advancement in BLM land management has already been dismantled - the new, more progressive "BLM Planning 2.0" rule has just been repealed by Congress. There are also indications of increased scrutiny of BLM plans that include important protections like Lands with Wilderness Characteristics and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

As BLM plans move forward into public comment periods, **it will be important for us to be active at the local level** to let the BLM know why protections are important in areas like the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area, and extensive wilderness-worthy lands in northwestern and southeastern Arizona, like the Dos Cabezas where a jaguar was sighted. We also need to support BLM staff when they take a stand for conservation. **Stay tuned to our website** for specific ways to get involved.

Read the article: [Zinke promises reorganization, fight against budget cuts.](#)

[Get Involved](#)



MAR  
31-2

### Yew Thicket Trail Restoration

As spring is in full swing come on up to the high country to the Sycamore Canyon Wilderness. Spring flowers will be in full bloom and Sycamore Creek running with clean, clear snow melt. The Yew-thicket trail restoration effort has been an annual priority for the Prescott National Forest, and each year with your help we continue to make this trail safer for all users. [Click here for more information](#)

APR  
7-9

## Kendrick Mountain with NAU Native American Student Services

AWC has created a new partnership this year with the Native American Student Services department at Northern Arizona University. This 3-day trail restoration project will include a variety of educational discussions including public lands management and wilderness ethics. We are looking for additional guest speakers for this outing, if you are interested please contact [brian@azwild.org](mailto:brian@azwild.org).

Email Brian



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The Arizona Wilderness Coalition actively engages and empowers citizens like you who care about Arizona's wild lands. For more than 35 years, we have been working with volunteers to conduct wild land inventories, educate citizens about the unique attributes of Arizona's landscape, and empower our activists to build support for their lasting protection. We need your help protecting our wild lands for the future...join us today!



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