



ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

2013–2014 Annual Report



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Wilderness Depends on Partners

My first year with Arizona Wilderness Coalition was intensely gratifying and active. While the world is changing rapidly, AWC is evolving as well. Yet the Board and staff of AWC remain constant in their commitment to preserve and protect wilderness through practical, feasible means.

This past year, AWC's Wilderness Stewardship program really came into its own, now serving all six national forests in Arizona. We're exceptionally pleased with how wilderness stewardship helps us develop better working relationships with our land management agencies. Read more about Wild Stew and our marvelous volunteers starting on page 6.

2014 also highlighted the broad public benefits of wilderness through national and local celebrations of "W50" — the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. AWC was delighted to produce "Views of the Wild" and participate in a host of other programs with wonderful conservation partners across the state. Through W50, AWC and partners engaged broader and more diverse audiences in conversations about wilderness — conversations that will be essential for wilderness to retain a supportive constituency in our changing world. W50 highlights begin on page 10.

In May, AWC's Board revised our Strategic Plan to keep AWC's efforts relevant and productive through changing times. AWC's top program priorities for 2015 include:

Wilderness Stewardship as a platform for engaging broader segments of the public, and as a means for

educating citizens and agencies about wilderness management needs

Wilderness preservation through "administrative protections" — by advocating for increased wilderness management in land use plans of the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Permanent protection of wilderness — through legislation or executive action

We are truly excited to begin two new initiatives in 2015 to implement these priorities. AWC will begin:

A new citizen wilderness inventory in northwestern Arizona

Expansion of Wild Stew to serve BLM lands, and better engage veterans and students

These efforts are only possible because visionary funders see the potential in these efforts, and volunteers and members devote their time and talent to AWC's work. We recognize the critical contributions of foundations, agencies, individual supporters, and volunteers in this Annual Report — you make it all possible!

Yours in wilderness advocacy,
Barbara Hawke, Executive Director

Protecting and restoring Arizona's wild lands and waters since 1979.

Wilderness Advocacy is our Passion

I have been a member of Arizona Wilderness Coalition since its inception in the 1979. AWC's initial impetus was to provide information and support for permanently preserving Arizona's remaining wild places. We worked closely with agencies and Congress, successfully ushering two statewide Wilderness bills for lands managed by the US Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). AWC maintains a statewide inventory of citizen wilderness proposals that would additionally protect over 6 million acres! These areas are eligible and worthy of wilderness protection, and are essential to satisfy the ecological and human needs of our fast-growing state. There is more legislative work ahead when and where political opportunity arises. In the interim, we adhere to a holistic strategy to defend our wilderness treasures.

AWC engages in agency planning processes to establish administrative wilderness protections and to steer poorly planned development away from our wild places and toward more suitable locations. We are initiating a new wilderness field inventory for the remarkably remote wildlands managed by the BLM Kingman Field Office. Traversing these wild landscapes while visualizing their permanent protection is simply exhilarating.

With shrinking federal budgets, our 90 designated wilderness areas need citizen support and oversight. Our prized Wilderness Stewardship Program (Wild Stew) fills this statewide void. We provide opportunities for volunteers to conduct a variety of needed tasks including trail clearing, exotic weed control, and habitat improvement. We also train individual stewards who independently monitor specific Wilderness areas and report to the managing agencies. Through Wild Stew we educate and train future wilderness advocates and build positive relationships with agencies. The passion is contagious and the work bolsters our credibility.

One month before his untimely death, Aldo Leopold wrote in the forward to his classic, A Sand County Almanac: "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." Wilderness advocacy is an expression of love and respect.

Don Hoffman, Board President

AWC's sustained effort resulted in 90 designated wilderness areas and two Wild and Scenic Rivers protecting 4.5 million acres in perpetuity — this is our legacy!



Arizona's Wilderness Legacy

Consider a legacy gift to the Arizona Wilderness Coalition in your will or other estate planning instrument to ensure that Arizona's Wilderness lands will remain intact for future generations. There are many ways to include charities in your bequest or as a beneficiary for retirement funds. Make 2014 the year you act to preserve wilderness through a legacy gift. Contact Barbara Hawke — barbara@azwild.org or 520.326.4300 — for more information.



Cultivating an educated and engaged wilderness constituency in Arizona.

We Have One *Amazing* Wild Stew

Wild Stew group volunteers and Individual Stewards are specially-trained and empowered to restore and monitor Arizona's 90 wilderness areas—performing invaluable service that agencies have limited resources to accomplish.

This past fiscal year, Wild Stew volunteers completed projects in Apache Creek, Castle Creek, Mazatzal, Mt. Wrightson, Four Peaks, Superstition, Rincon, Cedar Bench, Santa Teresa, Sierra Ancha, Salome, Fossil Springs, Red Rock-Secret Mountain, Strawberry Crater and Miller Peak Wilderness areas.



We're Helping People Do Great Things for Arizona's Wilderness

This past year, record numbers of AWC volunteers completed more work in more national forests than ever before. Nearly 200 volunteers participated in our Wilderness Stewardship program — 2500 hours in group projects and 500 hours as Individual Stewards — with impressive results, including:

- ❖ 180 miles of trails monitored for non-native plants, recreation impacts and trail conditions
- ❖ 45 creek miles inventoried for non-native plants, with over 200 non-native plants removed
- ❖ More than 200 pounds of trash hauled out of sensitive wilderness areas

In financial terms, that's over \$50,000 of field work contributed to our public lands; intrinsically, it is an invaluable investment in the future of Arizona wilderness, building an educated and engaged voice for conservation management.

In 2013-14, AWC hosted fourteen Wild Stew field events and four Individual Steward training sessions throughout the state. We expanded stewardship capacity by training the White Mountain Conservation League and Great Old Broads for Wilderness to conduct their own projects. And we invested in the future, providing a wilderness experience for two dozen participants from the National Student Congress in the Apache Creek Wilderness during the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

“As an agency partner, the Arizona Wilderness Coalition significantly expands our ability to conduct critical work on the ground by training and coordinating volunteers,” said Karl Malcolm, then acting Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers program manager for the southwestern region of the U.S. Forest Service. **“These volunteers serve as stewards of the land and inspire our communities to get involved to protect our watersheds and cherish spectacular Arizona landscapes.”**

Reconnecting people in Arizona with the power and beauty of wilderness.

Wild Stew Volunteers Give a Hoot!

As student associates with the Wild Stew program, last April we helped restore a beautiful wilderness area that had been heavily trashed by an extensive marijuana growing operation. Over two tons of trash were left behind near the Fossil Creek Wilderness. As a very sensitive part of these canyons harbored endangered Mexican Spotted Owls, the use of helicopters to remove trash was restricted. Our group's task was to haul out the garbage remaining within the wilderness.

Frigid weather didn't lower the spirits of these hardy volunteers. The group quickly constructed shelters and boiled water for hot drinks. Despite falling snow, howling wind and cold, all we could see were smiling faces. The group huddled around camp exchanging stories.

The next morning, as snow melted beneath our tents, we embraced the day's journey. We slowly made our descent down the steep game trail into a riparian wonderland. Lush vegetation lined the



meandering stream, springs dripped down mossy cascades, and bear scat abounded. We ate our lunches among huge Douglas fir trees, granddaddy Ponderosa pines, and many wild flowers exploding as a result of the previous day's moisture.

At the trash site we stuffed our packs with metal canisters, piping, food wrappers, and the like. Whatever didn't fit was duct taped to the outside of our packs. The sheer size of Brian's pack earned him the name "the beast." The hike out of the canyon was very challenging, yet rewarding. We emerged tired and accomplished, anticipating a victory burger and fries.

by Brian Stultz and Julie Polovitch



Investing in the Future

On September 2, college students from around the country arrived in Prescott, Arizona to participate in the Second Biennial Student Congress hosted by the Public Lands Foundation and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). These students had been selected through competitive essays, and represented many states and backgrounds. The students convened to discuss issues facing our public lands and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior.

AWC provided a wilderness experience in the Apache Creek Wilderness on September 3, the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Students ventured forth with spirits high and inspiration untrammelled. Wayward mules and a fairly severe evening monsoon conspired to create a true wilderness experience before the students headed to Phoenix to discuss the intricacies of Wilderness management, the idea of Wilderness and the implications of the younger generation's relationship to nature and wilderness.

— Brian Anderson

It was win-win — an overnight in a beautiful wilderness area, and a job well done.



Celebrating 50 Years of the Wilderness Act

How better to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, than to inspire, inform, and engage Arizonans in wilderness and nature issues? AWC undertook a myriad of outreach and educational efforts over the year — working with partners to promote W50 at large and small events across the state, including developing a statewide website and publicizing events in multicultural media

Views of the Wild

AWC assembled authors, performers and educators to explore the meaning of wilderness as it evolved through history, also examining wilderness from the perspectives of Native American and Hispanic cultures. A series of nine workshops and performances were held in multiple locations across the state. Attendees were treated to intimate insights into the lives of wilderness champions John Muir and Edward Abbey. The illustrious slate of presenters included Jack Loeffler, Andrew Gulliford, Doug Hulmes, Estee Rivera Murdock, Carolina

Castillo Butler, Camillus Lopez, and Jayson Barangan. Ms. Butler nicely summarized the deep insights elicited during the workshops in her observation, “We need wilderness to save our souls.”

Wild for Wilderness

With diligent leadership from partners including Sierra Club, the U.S. Forest Service, Friends of Sabino Canyon and dozens of additional groups, Tucson went “Wild for Wilderness” as a capstone W50 event in November. Sabino Canyon trails were lined with wilderness-oriented educational booths and interactive exhibits. AWC was delighted to host the “Arizona Wilderness Adventure”, a game where kids assumed roles as endangered species, overcoming obstacles and challenges to reach ta safe home in Wilderness. Musical entertainment was provided by Gregg Morton, Desert Bluegrass Association, The Nap Skippers, The String Bean Folk Orchestra, and Uncommon Folk.



Talk about interactive! Scrambling through your protected wildlife corridor (aka appliance box), finding food and water in fragmented habitat, and giving it your best shot all around? What a great learning experience for both the children and their parents!



Workshop participants ponder the interrelationships of wilderness, culture and economy. Nothing like teamwork to make a celebration happen!



“Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, and as vital to our lives as water and good bread.” — Ed Abbey

Looking Forward to the Next Fifty

The historic Wilderness 50th Conference in Albuquerque conveyed a sense of importance, of something happening that might not recur for a long time. It was humbling to be in the presence of so many environmental leaders who've been in the front lines of conservation causes since the 1960s. A bittersweet sense pervaded the event, knowing that many of the keynote speakers likely would not return for the 100th anniversary of the Wilderness Act — yet I think we all marveled at the next generations beginning to find their place in this movement. We're seeing the emergence of new leaders including our own Sam Frank, who built a

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keystone program for AWC, and is following a new path in conservation in the Pacific Northwest. The extent of knowledge and experience shared in conference sessions was monumental. Academicians, agency line staff and advocates examined approaches to citizen engagement, fire management, connecting wildlife corridors and so much more. It was extremely valuable to share thoughts with other staff of wilderness organizations and agencies from around the country, and also to hear Native voices calling us to embrace an enduring land ethic. — *Barbara Hawke*



Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell addresses nearly 1,000 participants at the conference. Wilderness legends Terry Tempest Williams, Jack Loeffler, and AWC's Kim Crumbo and Bart Koehler share the stage in Albuquerque with Dave Forman, filmmaker M.L. Lincoln and the chair of Ed Abbey. Bart Koehler and Sarah James serenade wilderness advocates.



Future 50 Fund

The legacy of the first 50 years of the Wilderness Act assured that some of our most precious wild lands and waters would be preserved forever. To realize the full vision of the Wilderness Act, we must reengage our efforts to achieve protections for those wilderness gems that lack permanent protection in Arizona.

You can help to ensure that the legacy of the Wilderness Act is not lost — that Wilderness preservation becomes a priority alongside goals for community health and economic well-being.

The future of Wilderness preservation is in your hands. Donate today to help us establish a strong foundation for Wilderness protection for the next 50 years and beyond. With your support, we can raise \$50,000 by December 31.

Please contact Barbara Hawke at 520.326.4300 to discuss your special *Future 50 Fund* gift.

"If you know Wilderness in the way that you know love, you would be unwilling to let it go." — Terry Tempest Williams

Native American History

The Sky Islands are steeped in history, from the role of important Native American leaders, through European settlement, to the mix of cultural traditions evident today. Well-known landmarks in the region bear testimony to this history.

Many local residents, visitors and recreation enthusiasts explore the dramatic rock formations of the Dragoon Mountains. These cliffs and canyons echo with memories and stories of earlier times, especially the dramatic struggles of the Chiricahua Apache leader Cochise.

Following a series of conflicts with U.S. Army troops after 1861, Cochise led some 250 warriors and 750 followers to the rugged natural fortress later known as Cochise Stronghold. Sentinels were constantly on watch from the towering rock pinnacles, and were able to sweep down to engage approaching enemies. This was the home and base of operations for this Apache band for at least fifteen years. Cochise died in 1874, two years after a treaty was signed with the U.S. Army. He is said to be buried in the rocks above one of his favorite camps in Cochise Stronghold.



Land of Legends: For Now, For Always



The Sky Islands region is an archipelago of mountains islands jutting out of a sea of deserts and grasslands which span the US–Mexico border. At the crossroads of the temperate and tropical realms, where the Chihuahuan and Sonoran Deserts meet, and on the lip of the Continental Divide, these forested mountains and their lush, watered canyons are home to an amazing variety of plant and animal species—from Elegant trogons to Thick-billed parrots, from jaguars and ocelots to Chiricahua leopard frogs and the rare Huachuca water umbel. Protecting large tracts of wilderness is not only essential to the survival of many of these rare and endemic species, but also in preserving the remote sanctuary of breathtaking views and world-class wilderness adventures.

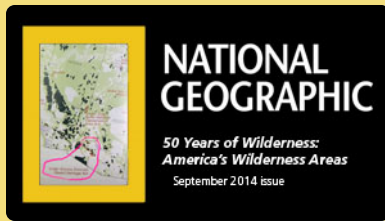
AWC is working with partners to strengthen the foundation of support for expanded wilderness and conservation protections in key areas including the Whetstone Mountains, Cochise Stronghold (Dragoon Mountains), and Chiricahua Mountains (particularly Ku Chish, or Cochise Head). In the past year, major progress was achieved in working with citizens and the Coronado National Forest to consider wilderness management for additional areas. AWC played a significant role in organizing workshops and skills training to foster citizen involvement in this effort. In an impressive collaboration, quiet recreation groups produced a joint proposal that would preserve wilderness alongside primitive climbing and mountain biking opportunities.

The Sky Island region is a world-renowned biodiversity hotspot.

In April 2013, Rep. Raul Grijalva introduced the Arizona Sonoran Desert Act, a smart assemblage of conservation designations that would benefit Arizonans, wildlife, cultural heritage and military viability. While Congress has passed little legislation this past year, recognition has grown for the need to advance bills like SDH.

National recognition was reflected in SDH's inclusion in a report from the Center for American Progress, "Languishing Lands"; and in National Geographic's issue on Wilderness Act's 50th anniversary. Closer to home, a Guest Editorial by Brian Stultz, published in the Arizona Republic and Arizona Daily Sun, called for passage of the SDH bill. AWC continues to broaden awareness of the special treasures needing preservation in the SDH region through community presentations and furthering media coverage.

Sonoran Desert Heritage Act Gains Greater Recognition



Protecting the Wildness of Arizona's Sparkling Green Gem

In an arid state, it's hard to image a scene of lush green banks and unspoiled riparian habitat, filled with bird species that bring birdwatchers from far and wide... The Verde River offers just that. For kayakers, wildlife enthusiasts, and those who are committed to the health of our state's few wild rivers, the Verde offers a hidden paradise. Still relatively remote and isolated, the Upper Verde River is home to thousands of plant and animal species, including nesting Yellow-billed cuckoo and wintering Bald eagles.

The Verde, along with the San Pedro River in southeast Arizona, is considered one of the last, free-flowing rivers in our state. From a recreational perspective, the river is regionally famous for its kayak, canoe, and rafting opportunities, not to mention superior hiking, birding, and swimming holes!

AWC continues to participate in collaborative efforts to preserve the Upper Verde, and in the past year focused our efforts on stewardship and education. We completed 4 wilderness stewardship projects in the broader Upper Verde watershed and led 3 educational hikes along the Verde River.

The Upper Verde is the longest perennial free-flowing river in Arizona.



Our Volunteers Make Us *Unstoppable!*

Volunteers

Individual stewards are noted in **bold**.

Josephine Abrams
Heather Adams
Patty Adams
Brian Andersen (AWC Intern)
Kurt Andersen
Jon Atkins
Brad Baker
Brian Barnes
Jeff Beauchamp
Kaitlin Berger-Jones
Michael Brown
Elias Butler
Greta Carriger
Jo Ann Caruthers
Scott Chambers
Jenny Lea Cobb
Gregory Cooper
Mindy Cox
Tim Craig
Angie Dell
Hugh Denno
Christine Donahue
Jim Dunlap
Nancy Dunlap
Duane Dunning

Jeri Edwards
Paul Elsner
Heather Finden
Alex Fitzhugh
Stephanie Frederick
Mary Gavan
Jeff Gest
Darryl Geurin
Shane Glynn
John Godden
Gary Grube
Brad Herbert
Bobbie Holaday
Tom Hollender
Billie Hughes
Thom Hulén
Doug Hulmes
Richard Inman
Michael Inzano
Judie Jackson
Lee James
Nikki Julien
Matt Kalina
Richard Karlin
Jack Kelly-Willis
Bob Kerr
Dave Kollar
Steve Larson
Nancy Lewis

Winnie Liang
Kathy Lopez
Larry Lopez
Mark Lowe
Karen (Murphy) Lowery
Aaron Macman
Audrey Mae
John Mangimeli
Rick Mauntel
Nicole Mayerhofer
Sallie McCutcheon
Sonia Mehren
Janet Millard
Matt Miller
Norma Miller
Suzanne Morse
Bill O'Brien
Robert O'Neil
John Orlando
Nick Pacini
Angelo Patane
Caroline Pechuzal
Nathan Pellier
Teddy Pepper
Pete Pierson
Julie Polovitch (AWC Intern)
Rick Resnick

Micah Riegner
Julie Rogers
Kenny Ruder
Dahila Schorr
Staffan Schorr
Ted Smith
Mike Snodgrass
Bill Sowle
Ellen Stein
Tom Stobo
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Cliff Wise
Diane Woodyard

In the field, at events, being the Voice for Arizona Wilderness!

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Sky Island Alliance Summit Hut
The Wilderness Society
The Yoga Connection
Tortolita Treats
Tucson Audubon Society
White Mountain Conservation League

W50 Event Partners

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Estee Rivera Murdock
Craig Weaver

Meg Weesner
Arizona Ecumenical Council Earthcare Commission
Arizona Historical Society
Bureau of Land Management
Friends of Ironwood Forest
Friends of Sabino Canyon
Friends of Saguaro National Park
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
National Forest Service
Prescott College
Pushmataha Center Sedona
Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter
Tucson YWCA
Uncommon Folk



Celebrating Wilderness Heroes

Jeff Beauchamp is an Individual Steward for the Kanab Creek Wilderness outside of Flagstaff. The Individual Stewards program offers training in wilderness monitoring and other skills, empowering the Steward to establish an ongoing familiarity with a particular wilderness area. The information gathered by Individual Stewards can be invaluable in identifying changes in wilderness and trail conditions, helping AWC and agencies focus stewardship efforts where they are most needed. Jeff shared these thoughts on the program:



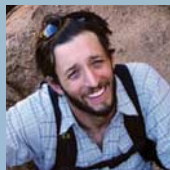
Living in Flagstaff gives me lots of nearby Wilderness to explore but my favorite area in Arizona has quickly become Kanab Creek Wilderness. The scenery and solitude on the grand scale of the north rim of the Grand Canyon are unlike anywhere else I have seen. Volunteering with AWC gives me more inspiration to continue to explore and monitor these canyons and other Wilderness areas all over the state. I have met some dedicated and passionate people on Wild Stew trips and am always looking forward to hearing about the next one. I'm proud to have a small part in the preservation of Arizona's Wilderness Areas.

John and Jeanie Watkins have volunteered with the Wilderness Stewardship program in a variety of capacities. We especially appreciate their "urban stewardship" stint for AWC this past year, watching over our Phoenix office.

"The O'odham believe it's important to know where you come from, so you can better serve the land and all the beings in our natural world." — Camillus Lopez

Celebrating Wilderness Champions

Darryl Geurin exemplifies AWC's most valued supporters. A native Arizonan who grew up in the desert, Darryl is a dedicated monthly donor. Darryl practices a simple, sustainable lifestyle without a car. We enjoy Darryl's visits to the Tucson office, where he shares stories of earlier times in southern Arizona, and views on current environmental topics. Darryl shared that "My heart and my memories are connected to this hot dusty desert ... My favorite memories of wilderness and being out in nature are snapshots over time: in places the wilder, the better, where the trail gets dimmer and dimmer."



The **Public Lands Foundation** advocates and works for the retention of America's Public Lands in public hands, professionally and sustainably managed for responsible common use and enjoyment. AWC was delighted to partner with PLF to support the recent National Student Congress, assembling two dozen college students from across the country to brave monsoons and venture into the Apache Creek Wilderness, then convene in Phoenix to wrestle with timely wilderness management issues. PLF's representatives demonstrated true commitment to empowering young adults to grasp public lands management with a strong conservation ethic. AWC is deeply appreciative of PLF's grant that enabled our participation in the National Student Congress.

We'd like to express special appreciation to the **Wilburforce Foundation** for their insightful and supportive approach toward grantees. The Foundation demonstrates a deep commitment to conservation over the long term. We especially enjoyed a very warm excursion through the Sky Islands with Wilburforce representatives in May.

Arizona Wilderness Coalition salutes two modern-day wilderness champions. **Sam Frank** worked for AWC since 2006, most recently as our Central Arizona Director. Sam built AWC's Wilderness Stewardship program from its beginnings four years ago to a very successful effort that now serves all six Arizona National Forests with over 200 volunteers. He was indefatigable in leading popular wilderness expeditions, and a consummate wilderness warrior in promoting good conservation practices on public lands. **Carla Olson** joined AWC in 2011, serving in multiple capacities, including being a critical part of the Wild Stew team, organizing trip logistics and volunteers. Recently, Carla's talents have shown especially bright through her communications work, launching the statewide Wilderness 50th website, designing AWC's beautiful 2014 newsletter and *Voices for Wilderness*, and overall taking AWC's print and digital communications to a new level. We miss them greatly!

Our Heartfelt Thanks to Our Amazing Donors

to \$5,000

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Doug Hulmes
Michael Quinlan

to \$1,000

Tana Karen Aikins
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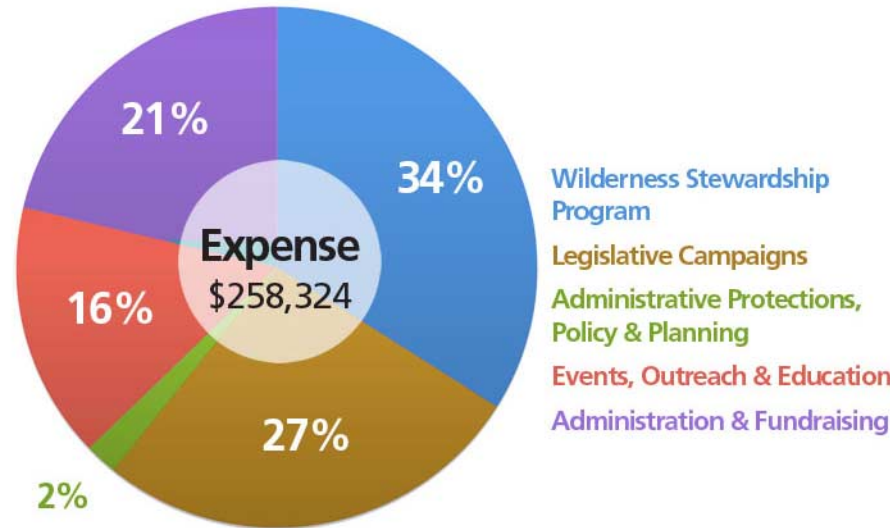
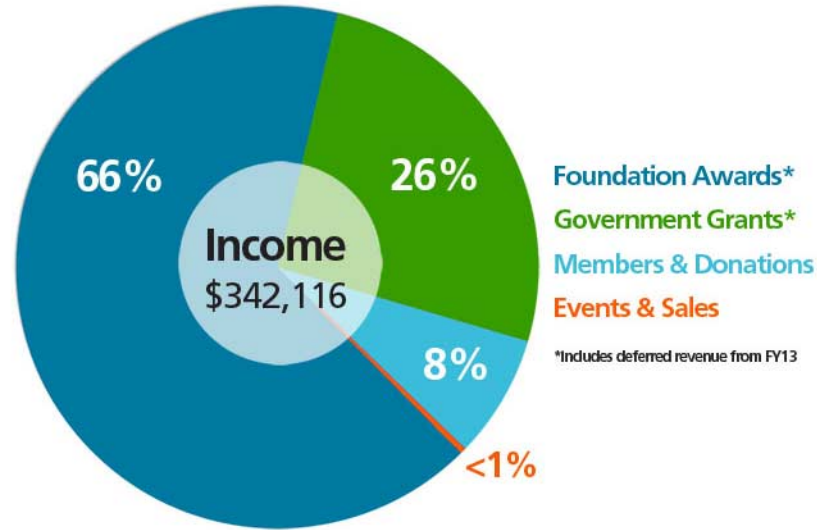
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“It has always been my understanding that truth and freedom can only exist in wild places.” — Daniel J. Rice

“Out of the wilderness, we realize, has come the substance of our culture, and with a living wilderness—it is our faith—we shall also have a vibrant vital culture.”

— Howard Zahniser

Zahniser was the main proponent of the Wilderness Act during the eight years that it took to pass the legislation, overseeing numerous rewrites, attending all 18 public hearings on the bill, and personally lobbying virtually every member of Congress in support of the legislation. He died before the bill was signed. Upon signing the Wilderness Act of 1964, President Lyndon Johnson stated “If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them something more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning.”

