``The past year was a time of transition at Defenders, as Rodger Schlickeisen, our president for 10 solid years, retired. Rodger spearheaded some of the nation’s most innovative wildlife initiatives, and our board honored him for his contributions to the organization and the larger conservation movement with the Defenders of Wildlife Legacy Award last fall. We continue to stand strong and ready to tackle the many challenges facing wildlife and habitats today. In a year when no animal seemed safe, bold, some members of Congress introduced anti-environmental bills by the dozen. With the help of our allies, supporters and members, Defenders deflected most threats. One of our greatest victories was defeating the so-called extinction rider. The rider would have eviscerated the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by preventing new species facing the prospect of extinction from obtaining the ESA’s protections—at a time when we were securing public lands, for responsible solar-energy development on public lands, and broadening support for this key legislation. In recognition of 20 years of outstanding leadership, we present the Wildlife Legacy Award to Rodger Schlickeisen (center) Board chair Victor Sher (left) and Defenders’ President Jamie Rappaport Clark (right) during the 2011 Wildlife Legacy Award to Rodger Schlickeisen (center) in recognition of 20 years of outstanding leadership. In October 2011, Jamie Rappaport Clark became president and CEO of Defenders of Wildlife after serving as executive vice president for seven years. A career biologist and leading expert on imported wildlife and the Endangered Species Act, Jamie was the senior director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from 1997 to 2001. Under her leadership, two million acres were added to the National Wildlife Refuge System and 37 new refuges were established. She also oversaw the recovery of key endangered species such as the bald eagle, gray wolf and peregrine falcon. Board Chair Victor Sher (left) and Defenders’ President Jamie Rappaport Clark (right) during the 2011 Wildlife Legacy Award to Rodger Schlickeisen (center) in recognition of 20 years of outstanding leadership. John Schlicher/www.joelsartore.com

``Jamie Rappaport Clark brings to the job an almost perfect combination of professional wildlife conservation experience and senior management skills, well honed by her seven years as executive vice president and CEO of Defenders of Wildlife, and a number of other impressive positions, including director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during some of that agency’s most successful years. I am confident Defenders will continue to be a major conservation force under her leadership.”’’
For more than six decades, Defenders of Wildlife has been a leading force in the protection of wildlife and wild lands. Using innovative, science-based approaches, we work from 10 field offices in North America to ensure that wildlife populations are secure and thriving, sustained by a diverse network of healthy forests, grasslands, mountains, deserts and waters. We believe that as a nation we have an ethical responsibility to be good stewards of the planet, to conserve all native species, to maintain the life-support functions of natural ecosystems and to protect a rich diversity of species for future generations.

Defenders works across the country to safeguard and restore imperiled species and wildlife habitat. And we work with ranchers in areas where wolves range with livestock where wolves range with livestock to show them it’s possible for people to share the landscape with large carnivores.

Defenders works to:

- Protect imperiled wildlife
  - We are a steadfast champion of the Endangered Species Act, America’s preeminent protection for imperiled wildlife.
  - We fostered the return of the gray wolf to the wild in the West and remain vigilant in protecting the wolf and other imperiled species as essential components in healthy ecosystems.
  - We help people live with wildlife and devise innovative coexistence programs that help promote the recovery of large predators and other wildlife, including wolves, gray bears, Florida panthers, black-footed ferrets and bison.

- Promote climate and renewable energy policies that benefit wildlife
  - We help federal and state agencies, land trusts and other key stakeholders address the effects of climate change in their conservation and natural resources plans.
  - We work with energy companies and the federal government to develop renewable energy that is “wildlife-friendly.”

- Conserve and restore native habitat
  - We safeguard the health and biodiversity of our public lands.
  - We pursue strategies to decrease fragmentation and increase connectivity between public and private conservation lands.
  - We advise and support private landowners, helping to maximize the impact of their conservation work.
Defenders of Wildlife provided highly effective and timely advocacy in support of my amendment that successfully stopped construction of the House floor. Once again Defenders' leadership in protecting the Endangered Species Act proved invaluable.

Defenders’ board member Susan Wallace was only four years old when she first got her glimpse of the bison with her father. Her passion for natural resources grew to include other species, and she didn’t know how or why. “Humans, of course, have always been a part of the landscape,” she says. The work of staff, like lobbying to protect wildlife and habitat, is what all too often is conserved and neglected. As chair of the board’s legislation committee, she has used the skills acquired by Defenders’ lawyers and engaged the next generation through mobile messaging and social media, such as Youtube and Facebook. “I know top predators are important to ecosystems, and we have to know how to spread that message,” she says. As chair of The Winnipeg Foundation, where she worked with her husband Bruce in 2009, Susan is deeply committed to safeguarding biodiversity for the future of human activity. “I care about people, but I think that wild creatures get overshadowed and end up not getting the protections they deserve.” Susan’s passion has served Defenders’ mission well. As Defenders’ President Jim Pappert Clark puts it, “Susan provided early support for our work to protect and strengthen the Endangered Species Act, and is helping to make the law more effective in conserving biodiversity. This support was essential this past year, when it was under constant threat.”

The ESA is the most important law in the history of wildlife conservation. I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to work with my colleagues at Defenders, where we combine our expertise in law policy and science to improve the effectiveness of the ESA. And I’m particularly excited about our work to develop incentives for landowners and federal agencies to conserve species before they are listed. Improving the ESA is one of the most important things we can do to preserve America’s wildlife heritage.

Defenders of Wildlife

Susan Wallace Ensuring a voice for wildlife

PROTECTING IMPERILED WILDLIFE

Keeping the Endangered Species Act Effective

Picturing a world without the bald eagle, the Florida panther, the gray wolf and the whooping crane. It seems inconceivable that such a world could exist, but if for a singular moment in history— the passage of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973—that world would be too real.

For nearly four decades, Defenders of Wildlife has used the ESA as the very cornerstone of our work: to demand a recovery plan for the faltering Mexican gray wolf, to protect nesting beaches of sea turtles and to fight for the future of polar bears in the face of climate change. We have leveraged the law to protect habitat for red-cockaded woodpeckers, to expand critical habitat for North Atlantic right whales and to protect the fragile eggs of piping plovers and sea turtles from off-road vehicles.

This law is effective and essential—a critical tool for responsible stewardship of the natural world. But despite its overwhelming bipartisan support in 1973 and being signed into law by President Richard Nixon, in the past two decades a vocal group of politicians have floated the destruction of this pillar of wildlife conservation. Consequently, in addition to fighting for vulnerable species using the ESA, we are fighting to preserve the act itself.

The ESA has helped keep the whooping crane (above) and the piping plover (below) from going extinct. That’s why Defenders fights so hard to ensure Congress gets it right.

© Joel Sartore/www.joelsartore.com

There were almost as many anti-ESA bills introduced in August 2011 as in the previous four Congresses combined. Many of these bills came out of a Pandora’s Box opened by a precedent-setting bill passed in May 2011, which removed protections for Northern Rockies gray wolves—the fruits of the 15-year history of the ESA that politicians rather than scientists ended a species’ protective status under the ESA.

Emboldened, anti-wildlife factions in Congress unleashed a torrent of anti-ESA bills, including the infamous “extinction relief” bills, which would have preserved new listings under the ESA and precluded any funding for designation of critical habitat. When House wildlife champion Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), Representative Mike Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) and others took on the fight to stop the tide, Defenders launched an inmate campaign that included round-the-clock phone banking, op-eds, 5,000 calls to House members and a letter to members of Congress signed by Defenders’ President Jamie Rappaport Clark and three other former directors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in opposition to the rider.

The extinction rider ultimately was defeated by an overwhelming bipartisan majority—a critical win for wildlife. Energized by this win, Defenders went on to help block a dozen or more additional proposals to undermine endangered species, by chronicling them in our report, The Endangered Species Act Under Attack. Spreading the word through media campaigns and helping our members participate in an ESA Lobby Day on Capitol Hill.

Susan Wallace is Defenders’ board member. Susan Wallace was only four years old when she first got her glimpse of the bison with her father. Her passion for nature resources grew to include other species, and she didn’t know how or why. “Humans, of course, have always been a part of the landscape,” she says. The work of staff, like lobbying to protect wildlife and habitat, is what all too often is conserved and neglected. As chair of the board’s legislation committee, she has used the skills acquired by Defenders’ lawyers and engaged the next generation through mobile messaging and social media, such as Youtube and Facebook. “I know top predators are important to ecosystems, and we have to know how to spread that message,” she says. As chair of The Winnipeg Foundation, where she worked with her husband Bruce in 2009, Susan is deeply committed to safeguarding biodiversity for the future of human activity. “I care about people, but I think that wild creatures get overshadowed and end up not getting the protections they deserve.” Susan’s passion has served Defenders’ mission well. As Defenders’ President Jim Pappert Clark puts it, “Susan provided early support for our work to protect and strengthen the Endangered Species Act, and is helping to make the law more effective in conserving biodiversity. This support was essential this past year, when it was under constant threat.”

The ESA is one of the most important things we can do to preserve America’s wildlife heritage.

© Nicole Bedard Photography

Defenders of Wildlife has a proven track record of success. But there are two very important reasons that make it even more essential. First, we are on the eve of a wave of extinctions for wild species demands that we redouble our conservation efforts. Second, opponents of the ESA have not given up; they will exploit any weakness in the law.

With 235 species standing in line for ESA listing, our work to save species more effective. More than any other national conservation organization, Defenders is investing in ecolog- ical and political capital in ensuring the Take-up we have developed effective ways for modernizing the act and are promoting the work of landowners and private sector partners. For example, we are collaborating with other conservation organizations to help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service develop a new approach to conserving ESA candidate species. The approach would create legal incentives for landowners and federal agencies to conserve candidate species before they are listed.

Our goal is to enhance conservation benefits for imperiled species on the ground, while promoting practical strategies which prevent endangerment during the ESA listing process. Promoting proactive conservation measures which prevent endangerment during the ESA listing process. Promoting proactive conservation measures which prevent endangerment during the ESA listing process. Promoting proactive conservation measures which prevent endangerment during the ESA listing process.
The boost in numbers for Mexican gray wolves in 2011—58 wolves and six breeding pairs, up from 50 wolves and two breeding pairs the year before—signals that a new emphasis on partnerships among the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and ranchers is helping livestock and wolves better coexist.

—Joel Sartore, Defenders’ Southwest director, and a member of the Mexican Mexican Wolf Recovery Team

**Mexican wolf**

Just two years ago, the prognosis for Mexican gray wolf recovery looked particularly grim. The wolf population had plummeted by 10 percent, and only 40 wolves remained in the wild. But in 2011 the wolf population grew—for the first time in four years—to 50 individuals, one of the most hopeful moments since the original plan for recovery was reintroduced in 1992. And the count climbed higher. The uptick signals that policy changes, including an end to excessive wolf removals and a reassertion of leadership for the Mexican Wolf Recovery Team to help develop a new wolf recovery plan since the original plan is almost 30 years old and has no clear goals. Over the past year, we have been working to defeat attempts by members of Congress to remove federal protection for all wolves, including those in the Southwest. To help convey the message that people in the Southwest support Mexican wolf recovery, Defenders teamed up our citizen media team, which placed more than 30 pro-wolf letters-to-the-editor in Arizona and New Mexico newspapers. Defenders also prompted pro-wolf editorials in the Arizona Republic and Arizona Daily Sun.

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The Mexican Wolf Recovery Team is helping livestock and wolves better coexist.

**Sea turtle**

Most than 1,400 sea turtles were killed or injured in the Gulf of Mexico in 2011. Evidence showed that the turtles likely died from shark fishing gear. According to government documents, only about 20 percent of shrimp boats in the Gulf are appropriately outfitted with gear allowing sea turtles to escape shark fishing, which, in most cases, is required to legally fish these waters. To give turtles—including the Kemp’s ridley, which was rescued from extinction in the early 1980s—a fighting chance for survival, Defenders is suing the National Marine Fisheries Service for failing to ensure that the shrimp fishery operates in compliance with the Endangered Species Act in a way that will not unduly harm sea turtles.

**Right whale**

Protected under the Endangered Species Act since 1973, North Atlantic right whales cling to existence with only about 400 remaining. Despite the National Marine Fisheries Service’s statement that the “loss of even a single individual may contribute to the extinction of the species,” these whales continue to die as a result of collisions with ships and entanglement in fishing gear. In 2010, two right whales died from fishing gear entanglement and at least seven additional new entanglements were reported. Yet the agency continues to allow these fisheries to operate without mandating that they use safer gear. Defenders continues to push for better protections, in part, by asking the federal courts to hold the agency accountable for its inaction and noncompliance with the ESA.
Manatee

Giant streams of shallow waters, Florida manatees have been struggling for decades to adapt to human activity around the warm coastal habitats where they live. Manatees were officially designated endangered in 1978, but they continue to face unsustainable levels of mortality from boat strikes and other threats. The last three years have been particularly deadly for manatees. In 2011 alone, watercrafts killed 88 manatees and 112 strikes and other threats. The last three years have been particularly deadly for manatees. In 2011 alone, watercrafts killed 88 manatees and 112

Wolverine

Wolverines are by nature creatures of the cold—a perilous distinction in an era of climate change. There are fewer than 300 wolverines in the lower 48 states and only about 32 of them appear to be successfully breeding. As global warming continues, wolverines are increasingly disturbed by snowmobiles and other human activities, and Defenders is working to protect sufficient wolverine denning habitat. We are also working to end trapping of wolverines, which is desperately needed to carry out the science that will help this imperiled species. Dave’s loss commits Defenders to continue the work in his name. The wolverine study will help buoy sea otters back to safety. Marine biologists don’t know what is dragging otter numbers down, but they remain hopeful that the clues revealed by the study will help save sea otters back to safety.

Pacific walrus

In 2010, a video camera captured the image of tens of thousands of walruses departing the waters of the Chukchi Sea. It was an ominous exodus docu- mented only twice before, in 2007 and 2009. Like so many Arctic animals, the wolverine is facing radical and rapid changes to the environment due to climate change. They have watched the ice retreat farther out to sea and are now faced with the choice of following the

Sharks

The world’s oceans have been home to sharks for 400 million years, and this ocean predator plays a critical role in the marine environment. Research has shown that shark populations deliver critical implications for ocean health. But shark populations are declining worldwide because of unsustainable fishing practices, including the cruel practice of shark farming. Each year, up to 75 million sharks are killed to feed the global demand for shark-fish soup.

Sea otters

Defenders secured an important win for sea otters by calling the California State Fish and Game, which controls donations from state taxpayers who support sea otter conservation. Over the past five years, the fund has raised more than $1.4 million. In 2010, a video camera captured the image of tens of thousands of walruses departing the waters of the Chukchi Sea. It was an ominous exodus documented only twice before, in 2007 and 2009. Disease from predators, overhunting and stampedes. In 2009, FWS reported the stampeding deaths of 70 walruses in Alaska, numbers that are likely to rise as ice retreats. Climate change poses a grave threat to the Pacific walrus, but like so many other imperiled species that are not listed under the ESA, the walrus must wait in line for protection while FWS spends through a large backlog of candidature species. In the meantime, Defenders is working to establish a sound scientific platform for walrus protection. For example, this year we funded remote sensing cameras in walrus haul-outs in Bristol Bay, which will record critical data about how climate change is affecting walrus behavior and help us to do research to better understand how toxic chemicals and pollutants are harming our species. Walrus populations are declining, but they remain hopeful that the clues revealed by the study will help save sea otters back to safety.
Living with Wildlife

Defenders is redefining wildlife conservation from the ground up by figuring out innovative ways for people to successfully share the landscape with wildlife, particularly large carnivores—like wolves, grizzly bears, Florida panthers and polar bears. Figuring out how to live with wildlife is the only way to achieve full and long-term species recovery, and it is a top priority for Defenders.

To date, we have “coexistence” projects in Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming. As the word coexistence implies, our projects rest on the conviction that, with cooperative planning and practical problem-solving on the ground, people and wildlife can live alongside each other and even thrive on the same landscape.

Defenders believes wildlife conservation is a collaborative endeavor. We work with ranchers, researchers, community and conservation groups and federal, state and tribal agency biologists to develop, field test, promote, implement and share the costs of these nonlethal wildlife deterrents, such as fencing, guard dogs and range riders. Our goals are to reduce wildlife and livestock losses, build better relationships among all stakeholders and keep the discussion solution-focused to demonstrate that living in the midst of large carnivores is not only possible but cost-effective and beneficial.

Wood River: A Model of Coexistence

Defenders’ flagship Wood River Wolf Project completed its fourth successful season in central Idaho, where four wolf packs currently range in Sawtooth National Forest. The project began after the Phantom Hill pack settled in the area and were targeted for extermination after preying on sheep. Defenders stepped in, met with sheep ranchers, state and federal agency representatives and county commissioners and convinced them to try nonlethal deterrents. The pack got a second chance and Defenders’ first true large-scale field test of our coexistence strategies was a great success.

This year, our field crew helped to protect 10,200 sheep during summer grazing months, just when wolf pups are big enough to start roaming and packs are beginning to expand their territories well beyond the den. In four years, fewer than 20 sheep have been lost to wolves. As a result, no wolves have been killed and the project became a model to try in other areas.

This year, our expanded efforts in the Wood River region gained the official support of county commissioners and a diverse group of partners including ranchers, local donors and state and federal wildlife agencies.

‘Defenders’ leadership was essential to the creation of the Idaho Wood River Wolf Project. The four-year demonstration project proved successful beyond our most optimistic expectations. Going into the 2012 grazing season, Defenders’ leadership remains central to sustaining and expanding the project and building regional acceptance of the value of nonlethal, predator-deterrence practices. Meeting these challenges looks possible and will be a significant achievement.”

—Commissioner Lawrence Schoen, Board of Blaine County, Idaho

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IN THE WAKE of Congress’ delisting of gray wolves in the Northern Rockies, our programs to reduce conflicts and foster public acceptance of wolves have taken on heightened urgency. In the past year, Defenders helped the Oregon legislature pass a bill designating $100,000 for livestock-compensation and wolf-coexistence programs. But to be eligible for compensation for livestock lost to wolves, ranchers must practice nonlethal predator deterrents. We also established a range-rider program in northeastern Oregon, where riders on horseback help protect livestock by hazing wolves on private ranchlands and in national forests.

And in Washington state, we are amending wildlife agencies with trainings on nonlethal deterrents and depredation investigations. We are also working with tribes, universities and local media to build support for the wolf’s return.

In Montana near Yellowstone and Glacier national parks, we continued our support for three range-rider programs, as well as fencing and other conflict-reduction strategies. Our ranching partners reported minimal wolf-related livestock losses—an especially notable accomplishment in areas where livestock predation had been chronically high in the past. In the Southwest, we completed 12 coexistence projects to reduce conflicts with the endangered Mexican wolf.

Defenders’ leadership was essential to the creation of the Idaho Wood River Wolf Project. The four-year demonstration project proved successful beyond our most optimistic expectations. Going into the 2012 grazing season, Defenders’ leadership remains central to sustaining and expanding the project and building regional acceptance of the value of nonlethal, predator-deterrence practices. Meeting these challenges looks possible and will be a significant achievement.”

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From Compensation to Coexistence

For 23 years, Defenders’ predator compensation fund paid ranchers full-market value for verified livestock lost to wolves and grizzlies—a total of $1.4 million. The fund laid the foundation for building rancher tolerance for wolves following their reintroduction in the West after being absent for most of the 20th century. Now that recent federal legislation has been passed to provide this type of funding, Defenders is focusing on proven methods that deter livestock losses all together. Having firmly established our reputation as the go-to group for large-carnivore conflicts, Defenders is the conservation community’s leading voice on living with predators.

Defenders works to develop successful strategies that allow humans and carnivores, from black-footed ferrets to grizzly bears (above), to coexist on the landscape.

Grizzly bear

ONLY ABOUT 1,600 grizzly bears remain in the lower 48 states. These bears are opportunistic feeders—a tendency that can make human and bear coexistence challenging. To survive in the wild, bears feed on everything from berries to carrion. A major cause of death for grizzly bears is from conflicts associated with habituation to attractants like garbage, chicken coops, fruit trees, livestock, and bee hives.

Defenders reduces conflicts between grizzlies and people by reimbursing ranchers for livestock losses and securing attractants like garbage. These projects include offering landowners financial assistance to install electric fencing around beehives, chickens, sheep and other livestock. We helped fund the installation of fencing around community dumps and provided bear-resistant trash containers and food lockers at public campgrounds. We also helped in the hiring of a range rider for a ranch with chronic bear conflicts. In the past year, we completed 27 proactive projects in northwestern Montana and northern Idaho in and around the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak recovery areas. We also hope to keep migration corridors to the Bitterroot safe for grizzlies to improve the odds for bears reoccupying this recovery area.

Polar bear

WITH THEIR hunting grounds literally melting out from under them, polar bears are forced to roam on land in search of alternative sources of food, resulting in increased frequency of bear-human conflicts. Coexistence strategies are critical to the polar bear’s future, which at the moment looks bleak given that the polar bear’s arctic range is likely to continue to shrink as sea ice forms later in the fall and melts earlier in the spring.

Defenders is working with Alaskan Native communities on the North Slope of Alaska to develop tools for living near polar bears. This year, we supported a pilot project to install bear-resistant food storage lockers in these communities, which serves the dual purpose of replacing historically used ice cellars that are failing due to loss of permafrost, and deterring polar bears from scavenging from human food sources.

Defenders also works with scientists, policy makers, Alaska Native leaders and conservation organizations to prepare a report on feeding methods that keep bears away from people, which will be used to help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and communities on the North Slope reduce the chances of conflicts between people and polar bears.
Florida panther

With only 10 to 16 adult Florida panthers in the wild, their survival is dependent on the ability of Florida residents to coexist with them. Much of the panther’s range in Florida is on private lands, so expanding available habitat will require working hand-in-hand with private landowners. This year, we have assisted property owners with funding for building predator-resistant enclosures to protect pets and livestock at night. We also recruited and trained volunteers to work with residents on conflict prevention and conducted training workshops on coexisting with panthers. Finally, Defenders is helping to develop coexistence tools and a conservation-incentive program to compensate ranchers for the ecosystem services provided by their lands.

Bison

They’re not carnivores, but bison are essential to the health of grassland ecosystems. That’s why Defenders has been working to expand the number and size of the continent’s wild bison herds, including the nation’s largest in Yellowstone National Park. In 2011, the state of Montana began allowing Yellowstone bison to roam Gardner Basin, a 75,000-acre area just north of Yellowstone, during the winter months. Many residents here welcome the bison, but some fear that the large grazers will damage their property or transmit disease. To avoid conflicts and maintain goodwill toward bison, we are helping residents in Gardner Basin build bison-resistant fences.

We have also worked tirelessly to help relocate some of these genetically important bison to new areas, including the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Indian reservations in Montana. Through financial support from Defenders, Fort Peck and Fort Belknap are expanding their bison reserves and building wildlife-friendly fencing—which keeps bison in while allowing elk and deer to jump over and pronghorn to go under. This work has the dual benefit of helping to restore wild bison herds beyond Yellowstone and helping the tribes reclaim part of their cultural heritage.

“Bison are a keystone species, but today wild herds are far too small and their range is far too limited to play any real ecological role. They are, in fact, ‘ecologically extinct.’ But by working with tribes, Montana officials and landowners around Yellowstone, Defenders is helping wild bison rebound for their sake and for the health of grassland ecosystems.”

– Jonathan Proctor, Defenders Rocky Mountain region representative, who works to protect and restore grizzly bears in the U.S. Northern Rockies and Cascades, and bison, swift fox, black-footed ferrets and black-tailed prairie dogs in the Great Plains.
Addressing Climate Change with Wildlife-Friendly Renewable Energy

Defenders of Wildlife is pioneering the science and strategies for helping wildlife adversely affected by climate change. Among other initiatives, we are championing the SAFE Act, legislation that would mandate a coordinated national adaptation strategy, sponsored by Sens. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) that would bring together federal agencies and Congress to develop response strategies for helping wildlife adversely affected by climate change.

Helping Wildlife Adapt to Climate Change

Climate change is proceeding at a rate that makes it imperative to adopt policies to help wildlife in the face of impacts such as shifting habitat ranges, rising sea levels along coastal areas, and changes in precipitation as the climate continues to change. That’s why Defenders has made the policy and science of wildlife adaptation a top priority. We are working closely with states, private landowners and land trusts, federal agencies and Congress to generate and hone smart strategies for helping wildlife adaptively affected by climate change. Among other initiatives, we are: championing the SAFE Act, legislation sponsored by Sens. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) that would mandate a coordinated national adaptation strategy, the inclusion of climate considerations into state wildlife adaptation plans, developing site-specific wildlife adaptation plans and enhancement of the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center. We also hosted a congressional briefing to further highlight the need for a legislative strategy for wildlife adaptation and successfully fended off a series of legislative attacks on climate change adaptation work by the federal government.

This year, our climate change experts conducted two assessments of species vulnerability to climate change. We analyzed the vulnerability of all 38 mammal species found in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to impacts from climate change. Our assessments found that almost half the species there are at serious risk due to climate change, making the protection of the refuge from oil and gas development and other disturbance that much more important for polar bears, arctic foxes and musk oxen. On the other side of the country, we worked with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and species experts to understand the vulnerability and potential for change of a sample of Florida’s unique wildlife. We also worked with the state to develop a process for incorporating climate change information into their state wildlife action plan. In other regions, we hosted a series of workshops in North Carolina and Oregon on developing and incorporating adaptation strategies into the state wildlife action plans. Defenders is planning a similar workshop series in California.

Defenders is working to ensure that the national transition to renewable energy is “smart from the start”—using both public and private land and focusing development on disturbed lands over more valuable wildlife habitat. Simple doesn’t make sense to degrade healthy land and destabilize imperiled wildlife in our attempt to create a healthier global climate. And it isn’t necessary. Over the past year we have analyzed potential wildlife impacts from renewable energy project development and made recommendations for the inclusion of climate considerations into state wildlife action plans. As a result of our efforts, the Interior Department issued a supplement to the plan, which included significant improvements for conservation.

Defenders is planning a similar workshop series in California.

NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND WILDLIFE SCIENCE CENTER

To help broaden our understanding of the impacts of climate change on natural resources, and to develop response strategies for wildlife and wild lands, Defenders advocated for the creation of the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center at the U.S. Geological Survey in 2008. We continue to push aggressively for funding for the center—efforts that have helped boost federal support from $21 million to $25 million in 2011.
Central to our mission is conserving and restoring the healthy network of habitats across our national wildlife refuges, national parks, and other public lands. For more than a century, the National Wildlife Refuge System has played a critical role in the protection of this nation’s wildlife heritage. With climate change and other societal changes affecting the ecological map, it is incumbent on FWS to ensure that management of refuges keeps pace with the times. Because of this, FWS crafted a new strategic “refuge vision” to better utilize lands set aside to conserve the nation’s fish, wildlife and plants.

The goal of these workshops is to demonstrate an inexpensive way to address climate change impacts. We worked with participants to define the species and habitats they wish to protect, identify the threats that may be on the horizon and determine tools for addressing those threats. We also produced a series of digital newsletters focused on climate change adaptation. In 2011, we helped to develop climate adaptation measures for wild species and Defenders is actively helping landowners enhance their conservation efforts.

Conservation Incentives
To make private land conservation more attractive and affordable, Defenders works to create incentives for landowners interested in habitat conservation. This year we helped pass a ballot measure in Oregon that will provide 15 percent of the state lottery funds—about $100 million annually—for wildlife and habitat conservation, including on private lands. Also in Oregon we worked to further legislation that will provide payments for ecosystem services to landowners who maintain and restore private lands for wildlife and habitat conservation.

Conservation Registry
Defenders’ unique conservation registry is an online database that tracks and maps wildlife habitat conservation projects across the country. Visitors to www.conservationregistry.org can look up projects in their area, seek out volunteer opportunities and even post their own projects. Over the past year we expanded the conservation registry to include the states of Arkansas, California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. More than 6,000 projects are now part of the registry, making it the most comprehensive online tool for tracking and mapping wildlife habitat conservation actions across the nation.

Private lands
Private land conservation provides critical habitat for wild species and Defenders is actively helping landowners enhance their conservation efforts.

Conversing and Restoring Native Habitat

From national forests to refuges, Defenders works to sustain the conservation of habitat and wildlife.

Public lands
Our national wildlife refuges, national forests and other public lands from the cornerstones of federal wildlife conservation and restoration, and Defenders has been a longstanding advocate for smart management of these lands.

National Forest Management
Defenders has fought for years to ensure that healthy wildlife populations are integral to national forest management practices. We blocked the George W. Bush administration’s attempts to weaken wildlife protections under the National Forest Management Act and since then, we have been relentless in our efforts to ensure that new national forest regulations contain protective provisions for wildlife conservation and adequate accountability. In support of this effort, we produced Obama’s Forest Rule, a report detailing our expectations for strong, binding wildlife protections. In support of this effort, we produced a new web page (defenders.org/strong-forest-management) in an Associated Press story picked up by hundreds of smaller outlets. We worked with the states and members of Congress on letters to the Obama administration, advocating for a strong forest-management rule. And we developed a new web page (defenders.org/strong-management) to give stakeholders, media and the public about our forests) devoted to providing information for a strong forest-management rule. And we developed a new web page (defenders.org/strong-management) to give stakeholders, media and the public about}
A Tribute to Rodger Schlickeisen

Rodger Schlickeisen, who retired from Defenders this fall after 20 years as president and CEO, was the sole honoree at our annual awards dinner on September 22 in Washington, D.C. Board member Jeff Corwin served as master of ceremonies at the event, which was attended by more than 400 people. Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), League of Conservation Voters President Gene Karpinski and Defenders board members Ed Amer and Winsome McIntosh delivered tributes. Grammy-nominated singer Neko Case performed a song in Rodger’s honor. The dinner raised more than $600,000 to help us advance critical work for wildlife. Thanks to all who donated so generously and to all who joined us for this special evening.

*For the pie-chart illustration, we have excluded the negative loss in investments in the development of the percentages.

**2011 uses of funds**

- Wildlife action: $9,155
- Law and legislation: $3,347
- Media and education: $9,619
- Constituency outreach: $1,110
- Fundraising: $2,833
- Management and general: $5,474
- Total Expenses: $31,538

**2011 sources of funds**

- Grants and contributions: $24,568
- Bequests, trusts and split interests: $3,285
- Income from investments: ($1)
- Royalties and other earned revenues: $2,571
- Contributed services: $1,279
- Total Revenue: $31,702

**Change in net assets**: $164

**Net assets, start of year**: $23,675

**Net assets, end of year**: $23,839

Dollars are in thousands.

In 2011, Defenders of Wildlife’s 1 million members and supporters contributed more than $31 million for wildlife and wildlife habitat. Law firms and others generously donated their time and expertise. Whether in the field, the courts or on Capitol Hill, it is the steadfast support of our donors that allows Defenders to sustain our program and public education efforts.

**Development Committee Chair Uses Sepelka celebrates Defenders’ support of the dear lady.**

President and CEO Jamie Rappaport Clark, President Emeritus Rodger Schlickeisen and board member Jeff Corwin celebrate Rodger’s legacy at the awards dinner.

Richard Kopcho

Making the most of every dollar

Defenders’ board member Richard Kopcho developed a love of the wild early on, fishing trips with his father, hiking with the Boy Scouts and skiing and backpacking in the Sierra Nevada. Early in his life, the wild called, one howling icon of the wild in particular—the wolf. “Sometimes in my early 20s, I was a magazine article with a logo of Defenders of Wildlife and its image of the wolf,” Richard recalls. “It spoke to me, and I sent in my $10 or $15, and I kept sending in my $10 or $15.”

Years later, Richard and his wife, Darcy, decided one Christmas to donate to Defenders’ adopt-a-wolf program. “We had a real tie to the family structure of wolves, the way they stay together. We decided our family totem was the wolf,” he says.

In 2005 the Kopcho family—Richard, Darcy, Blake and Jessie—attended Defenders’ Wildlife Conservation Workshop in Yellowstone, where they experienced an ecosystem made whole by the return of the wolf. Richard was soon invited to join Defenders’ board of directors, where he has served for six years, including several as treasurer.

“Richard has been invaluable to Defenders as we navigate these challenging economic times,” says Defenders’ president Jamie Rappaport Clark. “His financial expertise has helped us maintain our efficiency and effectiveness, so that more resources are available for the core work of wildlife conservation.” Richard and Darcy also donate generously through the Kopcho Family Foundation and encourage others to support Defenders’ work, including Blake and Jessie, who are both members.

“What I value about Defenders is its willingness to take on those special interests that scheme to use public land and resources for personal benefit and its commitment to serving as a guardian of the public trust and of nature’s trust,” says Richard.
Way to Give

President's Council

Donors of $1,000 or more are recognized as members of the President's Council. This special leadership group provides important support to Defenders' programs and offers opportunities for more personal involvement in the work of the organization. Visit the President's Council website at: www.defenders.org/presidentscouncil.

Corporate Matching Gifts

Many employers match charitable contributions made by their employees. Companies may match donations made by current employees, spouses and even retirees. Check with your personnel office about your company’s program or visit us at: www.defenders.org/matching.

Workplace Giving/Earth Share

Earth Share is a nationwide network of America’s leading nonprofit environmental and conservation organizations that raise funds through voluntary payroll deductions at federal, state, city, corporate and union workplaces across the country. Ask about Earth Share where you work and designate Defenders of Wildlife for all or part of your gift. (CFC #6946)

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Funds for the Future

Defenders of Wildlife is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Contributions to Defenders of Wildlife, our wildlife guardians Circle members are recognized as a part of our inner circle. Donors are key partners in our work to protect wolves and other wildlife. Members who support Defenders of Wildlife with a donation of $100 or more receive a special membership package and are invited to join our President’s Council. This special leadership group provides important support to Defenders’ programs and offers opportunities for more personal involvement in the work of the organization. Visit the President’s Council website at: www.defenders.org/presidentscouncil.

To include Defenders in your will or other estate plans, please provide the following language to your professional advisor:

“I bequeath (describe dollar amount, asset to be given or percentage of your residuary estate) to Defenders of Wildlife (Tax ID # 53-0183181), a nonprofit educational organization under the laws of the District of Columbia with its principal place of business at 1950 M St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.”

By including Defenders as a beneficiary in your will, living trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy or other estate plan today, you can provide a legacy plan, life income gifts bequests and life income gifts that raises funds through voluntary payroll deductions at workplace giving/earth share nonprofit environmental and conservation organizations that raise funds through voluntary payroll deductions at workplaces across the country. Ask about Earth Share where you work and designate Defenders of Wildlife for all or part of your gift. (CFC #6946)

For more giving program, your donations can be made easily and automatically through a credit card or checking account. For more information, visit: www.defenders.org/wildlifeguardians. For more information, visit: www.defenders.org/wildlifeguardians.