

THE TRACKS YOU LEAVE BEHIND

FINANCIAL PLANNING NEWS AND
INSPIRATION FOR FRIENDS OF DEFENDERS

Florida Manatee Deaths Hit Record High

This year it has become as clear as a crystal spring that Florida manatees are facing serious and unprecedented threats. In July—only halfway through 2021—the number of manatee mortalities hit a new annual record of more than 800. As of August, this has increased to over 900.

Florida manatees are a West Indian manatee subspecies native to the southeastern U.S. Manatees are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and also protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act.

With particularly cool temperatures early last winter, manatees sought warmer waters to escape the possibility of cold stress. In many of these areas along the Atlantic coast, algal blooms fueled by water pollution have caused the loss of large areas of seagrass—the manatees' staple food. "We have never before seen manatees starving to death like this in high numbers," says Elizabeth Fleming, senior Florida representative at Defenders of Wildlife. "This catastrophic die-off foreshadows

the manatee's future unless we take immediate and effective action."

Algal blooms—fueled by decades of agricultural, urban and industrial runoff and compounded by sewage overflow and other pollution—kill seagrass by preventing it from getting sunlight and the nutrients it needs to grow.

Looking beyond the current crisis, the greatest long-term threat to manatees remains the loss and degradation of natural habitat that provides the forage and warm water essential to their survival. Additional future mass mortality events could result if we fail to restore seagrasses and other food sources and natural alternatives to artificial warm water sources such as power plant outfalls. Sixty percent of Florida's manatees

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POLAR BEARS © TIMOTHY R GRAMS



BEAVER BY USFWS/LARRY PALMER



SANDHILL CRANES © LARRY LAMSA

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USFWS/HILARY GODLEY

A Brighter Future for Wildlife, Retirement Security for You

Do you have wiggle room for charitable giving this year? As the calendar year ends, so does another tax year. To get even more tax benefits, consider creating a charitable gift annuity (minimum \$10,000) with Defenders of Wildlife to get an immediate tax deduction and to support our indispensable work, all while receiving income for the rest of your life. Charitable gift annuities are a tax-savvy way to support yourself and

the causes you love.

Don't need additional income for a few more years? You can defer your annuity for a year or longer to receive a higher payout rate. Payouts can begin at any time, as long as you're at least 60 years of age. 🐾

AGE	RATE
60	3.9%
65	4.2%
70	4.7%
75	5.4%
80	6.5%



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USFWS/DANIELLE BRIGIDA

Protecting Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

The Interior Department announced at the beginning of August that it will formally review the Trump administration's decision to open the refuge to oil and gas leases for drilling. The review will also consider possible

alternatives to leasing, such as declaring some areas of the coastal plain off-limits, banning surface infrastructure in "sensitive areas" and barring more than 2,000 acres of surface development across the coastal plain. 🐾

Crowdsourcing Beaver Data

As beavers continue to recover and their populations grow and expand, it's critical for scientists, agencies and landowners to understand where these ecosystem engineers are currently found and how beaver interact with the landscape. Toward that end, our Center of Conservation Innovation team has created the iBeaver app, a new tool to crowdsource data on the species. 🐾

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Progress for Red Wolves

In January we won our lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for failing to uphold their commitment to save the wild red wolf population, which has dwindled to the single digits. As a result, FWS finally released new captive-bred red wolves (four adults and four pups) in the wilds of North Carolina. We are in discussion with partners and advocates across the region promoting the viability of finding additional sites where red wolves can safely and sustainably be reintroduced. 🐾

KATY FOSTER/NOAA FISHERIES, UNDER PERMIT 18786

For More Information | Call **1.800.915.6789** | Email **leg**



Ways to Support Defenders Without Cash

- Fund a charitable gift annuity with appreciated securities.
- Give a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA.
- Name Defenders of Wildlife as a beneficiary of your will. You can do this easily online at FreeWill.com/Defenders.

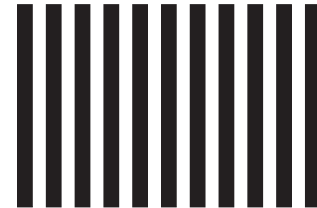
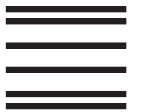
Interested in learning more? Tear along the perforations, check the subject(s) of interest to you on the reverse side, fold in half, tape shut (to keep your address information private) and drop in the mail.



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Habitat Victory for Southern Resident Orcas

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration finalized a rule this summer to expand the area designated as southern resident orca critical habitat by approximately 16,000 square miles, or 640%. With this expansion, the federal government has recognized the entire range of this species. 🐾

Florida Manatees

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currently rely on the outfalls to stay warm in the winter. This is an unsustainable situation for the species because these artificial warm water sources can fail and will likely be taken offline in the coming decades. Many of the power plants where they're located don't have sufficient food sources for manatees nearby.

One viable option for providing additional warm water winter habitat with the forage sources manatees need is to restore the Ocklawaha River. The river is the heart of a 217-mile system of rivers and springs called the Great Florida Riverway. Breaching the Rodman/Kirkpatrick dam that impounds the Ocklawaha would restore manatee access to numerous warm water springs currently submerged beneath artificially high-water levels created by the dam. This habitat could support hundreds of manatees and provide unimpeded access to additional habitat in Silver River and Silver Springs that is also part of the Great Florida Riverway.

Defenders is ardently advocating alongside the Free the Ocklawaha River Coalition to restore the river to a free-flowing state with much-needed habitat for manatees. 🐾



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Thank you for your commitment to Defenders as a Wildlife Legacy Society member! Let us know if you'd like to learn more about any of the following:

- I am interested in bequests.
- I am interested in gift annuities.
- I am interested in sharing retirement assets.
- I am interested in will-planning basics.






BLM

FALL 2021

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Inside this issue:

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-  *Recent wildlife and habitat victories across the nation*
-  *Protect wildlife and your retirement plans with a charitable gift annuity*

