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2021

ANNUAL REPORT

DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE made important progress for imperiled species and vital landscapes across the United States in 2021.



MEXICAN GRAY WOLF © REBECCA BOSE/WOLF CONSERVATION CENTER

LAWYERS immediately **challenged** the premature and reckless decision to strip **gray wolves** of federal **Endangered Species Act (ESA)** protections. For many decades, Defenders has led the effort to protect and restore the gray wolf, and we will continue to fight the unscientific and hostile anti-wolf policies that impede conservation progress and will carry on our unrelenting battle to restore federal protections for this iconic keystone species.

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© DANIEL HATCH



MANATEE | TRACY COLSON/USFWS

LOBBYISTS worked around the clock to keep wildlife and climate priorities in the **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**. We also continue fighting to keep important wildlife and habitat funding in relevant **appropriations bills**.



POLICY EXPERTS pushed forward on the urgent need for a **National Biodiversity Strategy (NBS)**, an all-of-government approach to address the unprecedented loss of wildlife and habitat we are experiencing. We have coupled this with our new campaign to **expand** the **National Wildlife Refuge System** to preserve our nation's only lands set aside for wildlife. By defending, funding and expanding our national wildlife refuges, we will directly address biodiversity loss and climate change while promoting increased equitable access to nature.



FIELD TEAMS were on the ground helping to recover imperiled species. From **panthers** and **sea turtles** in Florida to **wolves, bison** and **black-footed ferrets** in Montana, Defenders' conservation experts were in the field saving wildlife all over the country.



CONSERVATION INNOVATION EXPERTS provided comprehensive analyses to guide policy and inform conservation strategies to reach the goal of protecting **30%** of our **terrestrial** and **marine systems by 2030 ("30x30")**. Defenders' Center for Conservation Innovation (CCI) produced a **report** which details actions we need to take to achieve 30x30 while protecting biodiversity and addressing the climate crisis.

THANK YOU

WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MUCH THIS YEAR WORKING WITH AN ADMINISTRATION THAT VALUES SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION.

Our many successes include the return of protections to the Tongass National Forest in Alaska and the suspension of oil and gas leasing permits for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Defenders also played a lead role in successfully defending the Migratory Bird Protection Act from attack and securing critical protections for migratory birds. Throughout 2021 Defenders made important progress for the wildlife and wild places we all love, yet our nation's wildlife still face unprecedented challenges. More and more species, including manatees, Mexican gray wolves, polar bears and North Atlantic right whales, face the very real threat of extinction because of climate change, habitat loss, pollution and inadequate protections. In our work we continue to demonstrate success by following the science, building partnerships, leading with innovative solutions and focusing on collaborative and practical approaches in defense of nature. Together we can make a lasting difference for wildlife and habitats. Your support is essential to our work and we couldn't do it without you. Thank you for being an important part of our efforts to protect imperiled wildlife across our nation.



Jamie Rappaport Clark
President and CEO



John Dayton
Board Chair



© HEARST MEDIA PRODUCTION GROUP/JEFF CORWIN

OUR NEW TELEVISION SERIES, *WILDLIFE NATION WITH JEFF CORWIN*, premiered in October and airs every weekend on ABC stations nationwide. This groundbreaking series takes Jeff across the country to meet Defenders' experts along with our science, tribal and community partners to educate and inspire viewers to join with Defenders to protect wildlife. While highlighting some of our important conservation work and raising awareness of

important conservation challenges, this family-friendly program will undoubtedly motivate a new, diverse generation of wildlife advocates and broaden our supporter base to advance our mission.

WILDLIFE NATION



DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE is committed to a future where North American wildlife and habitats are secure and thriving. We believe in the inherent value of wildlife and the natural world, and our approach is pragmatic and solutions-oriented. We aim to solve conservation challenges by collaborating and engaging with communities at the local level, by fighting for the protection of imperiled species in the courts and the halls of Congress and by defending our bedrock environmental laws, especially the Endangered Species Act, our nation's most effective law to protect wildlife from extinction. We are guided by three conservation imperatives:

- **PREVENT** species and their habitats from becoming imperiled,
- **PROTECT** endangered and threatened species and their habitats and
- **RESTORE** the health of once-vulnerable species and their habitats.

Guided by these conservation goals and bolstered by your generous support, Defenders of Wildlife proudly presents our 2021 accomplishments.



CARIBOU © JANET CERREANI

AS A RESULT OF OUR HARD-FOUGHT BATTLE TO PROTECT CALVING CARIBOU AND DENNING POLAR BEARS

in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, Defenders celebrated President Biden's suspension of the oil and gas leasing permits issued at the end of the previous administration.



MENDENHALL GLACIER/TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST © JASON MAHAJ

DEFENDERS' TIRELESS LEGAL BATTLE TO PROTECT THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

in Alaska ended with success when the Biden administration announced **full restoration** of protections for this remarkable landscape, reinstating the National Roadless Conservation Area **rule** and shutting down the largest old-growth forest logging project proposed in decades. This forest is one of the world's largest carbon reservoirs and home to imperiled species like the Alexander Archipelago wolf, Prince of Wales flying squirrel and Queen Charlotte goshawk.



HORSESHOE CRABS © ARIANE MUELLER

DEFENDERS WON A HUGE VICTORY FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS AND HORSESHOE CRABS

when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), in response to our lawsuit, halted the **harvest** of horseshoe crabs within Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge in South Carolina without a special use permit for commercial purposes. Commercial harvesting of horseshoe crabs by the medical industry has severely limited an important food source for federally protected red knots and other migratory birds.

Opposite page:
Defenders of Wildlife coexistence experts demonstrate the use of fladry—a proven tool for deterring predators in grazing areas—at a workshop in Montana.

DEFENDERS CONTINUED OUR HIGHLY EFFECTIVE COEXISTENCE

WORK to prevent human-wildlife conflicts and build social acceptance for important species like wolves, bears, panthers, bison, prairie dogs and beavers. We demonstrated huge success in our coexistence efforts promoting and providing **range riders**, turbo-fladry, pond levelling, tree fencing, bear-resistant trash receptacles, **food storage lockers** and electric fencing.

DEFENDERS' RENEWABLE ENERGY EXPERTS released a **report** detailing how installing large-scale solar panels on previously disturbed sites such as rooftops and parking lots can prevent destruction of wildlife habitat and harm to water quality while improving quality of life, addressing environmental injustices and creating jobs.



© CRAIG MILLER/OWW



© PATSY RUSSO



BELUGA WHALE | PAUL WADE/MOAA FISHERIES

DEFENDERS WON A HUGE VICTORY FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS

when the Biden administration announced it was restoring protections for migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Defenders played a lead role in the reintroduction of the Migratory Bird Protection Act that would codify protections for migratory birds under the MBTA against incidental take, thereby ensuring lasting protections for birds regardless of the administration.

AS A RESULT OF A DEFENDERS LAWSUIT,

we celebrated a victory for protecting **Bristol Bay** in Alaska when the Biden administration announced the restoration of protections for this spectacular marine ecosystem. The move blocks construction of Pebble Mine, a destructive open-pit mining site that would harm local communities—particularly Alaska Native tribes—and wildlife, including the world's largest remaining wild sockeye salmon fishery and the critically endangered Cook Inlet beluga.

DEFENDERS ANNOUNCED OUR NEW CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM,

the only federal lands in the country

set aside for the protection of wildlife. National wildlife refuges provide essential habitat for over 500 endangered and threatened species, which makes them high-priority areas for protection as we race to save species from extinction. Defenders led the support for a bipartisan bill to create **a brand-new national wildlife refuge** in southern California, the Western Riverside County National Wildlife Refuge, which would be one of the nation's largest wildlife refuges at approximately 500,000 acres, benefitting more than 30 threatened and endangered species and increasing access to the outdoors for nearly 12 million residents in the surrounding area.

DEFENDERS CELEBRATED A COURT VICTORY TO PROTECT IMPERILED POLAR BEARS

from drilling when a judge ruled that federal permit authorizations for ConocoPhillips' Willow drilling project in Alaska violated the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act. Defenders also fought for polar bears on Capitol Hill by leading advocacy on the Polar Bear Cub Survival Act of 2020, a bill we drafted to prohibit oil and gas activities within one mile of polar bear maternal denning habitat.

IN A VICTORY FOR MEXICAN GRAY WOLVES, Defenders' **legal action** resulted in a judge ruling that FWS must address poaching in the recovery plan for this critically endangered species. Defenders continues to focus our efforts on factors hampering recovery of Mexican gray wolves, including the agency's dependence on lethal removal as a management tool for livestock conflict and pressure from the states of Arizona and New Mexico to stop the release of bonded pairs into the wild.

DEFENDERS SUCCESSFULLY CHALLENGED FWS in court to protect the northern long-eared bat, with a federal judge ordering the agency to determine whether this species warrants listing as an endangered species. After suffering catastrophic declines in their core range because of white-nose syndrome, northern long-eared bat populations continue to decline from habitat destruction caused by mountaintop-removal coal mining. Full protection under the ESA is essential for this species' survival.

DEFENDERS' SUCCESSFULLY ADVOCATED for the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the bedrock law that protects our nation's wildlife from extinction. We celebrated President Biden's decision to reverse harmful rules enacted by the previous administration that weakened the ESA. With an escalating extinction crisis at hand, we desperately need to strengthen and fully fund the ESA. Defenders will continue to defend our critical environmental laws and all the imperiled species that rely on them for their survival.



ARCHPELAGO WOLF | DESIGN PICS INC/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



© CHAMOUS ANDERSEN/DOW

DEFENDERS MADE HUGE PROGRESS FOR BISON,

continuing to expand our partnerships with the Intertribal Buffalo Council and numerous tribes to restore bison to suitable prairie grassland habitat. We helped establish a conservation herd on protected grasslands in Colorado (and celebrated the birth of 7 calves) and continued our support of the bison conservation transfer program by transporting Yellowstone bison to the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana that would have otherwise been sent to slaughter. Defenders also assisted in transferring over **50 bison** from the Fort Peck Reservation to the Yakama Nation in Washington and the Modoc Nation in Oklahoma. We proudly celebrated the 10-year anniversary of our highly effective Yellowstone bison coexistence program which provides funding for exclusion fencing on private property and builds acceptance and tolerance for roaming bison.



SWIFT FOX © DAVE SHOWALTER

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN 50 YEARS,

four **swift fox kits** were born on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Montana, the result of Defenders' work to recover this imperiled species across its historical range in the Great Plains. We continued our partnership with the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes to relocate 49 more swift foxes from Wyoming and Colorado to Fort Belknap.



BLACK-FOOTED FERRET | RYAN MOHRING/FWS

DEFENDERS CONTINUES TO LEAD THE WAY

in conserving and recovering the endangered black-footed ferret. We assisted the Fort Belknap tribes with the annual survey, during which ferrets were trapped, had health screens conducted and were vaccinated for the plague. Defenders also assisted FWS and tribal leaders to reintroduce 17 ferret kits into the wild.

AFTER ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL DEFENDERS LAWSUIT ON BEHALF OF THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED RED WOLF, FWS reversed its decision to limit the recovery area and committed to a robust release strategy. After years of inaction, FWS released eight wolves to the wild in North Carolina and plan to release nine more wolves in the spring of 2022. This is an incredible win for this critically endangered species whose population has dwindled down to single digits in the wild because of mismanagement, vehicle strikes and poaching.

DEFENDERS CONTINUED TO LEAD EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE FLORIDA MANATEE, a beloved species that suffered the **deadliest year** on record in 2021, tragically surpassing 1,000 deaths because of water pollution and lack of warm water habitat. Defenders led advocacy and education aimed at restoring the natural flow of the dammed **Ocklawaha River**, which would provide critical warm-water habitat that manatees need to survive. Defenders' legal team continued to fight for manatees in the courts, holding government agencies accountable for protecting critical habitat and addressing the devastating water pollution that is killing the seagrass and causing manatees to starve.

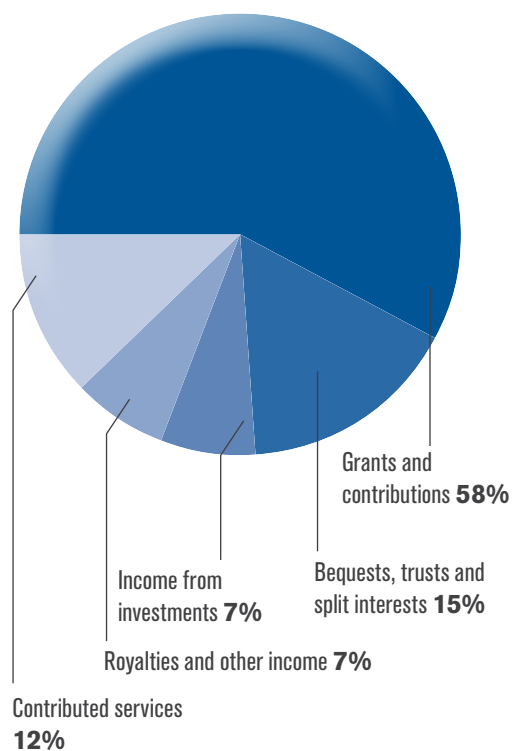


MANATEES | SAM FARKAS/NOAA

In 2021, Defenders of Wildlife's nearly 2.2 million members and supporters contributed more than \$49 million for wildlife and wildlife habitat. This figure includes all those who generously donated their time and expertise. The steadfast support of our donors allows Defenders to sustain our program and public education efforts in the field, the courts and on Capitol Hill.

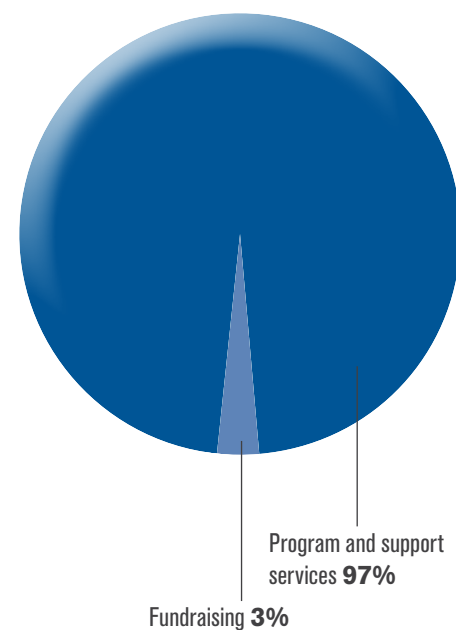
2021 SOURCES OF FUNDS

Grants and contributions	\$29,057
Bequests, trusts and split interests	\$7,692
Income from investments, annuity reserve funds and trusts	\$3,354
Royalties and other income	\$3,576
Contributed services	\$6,140
Total Revenue	\$49,819



USES OF FUNDS

Biodiversity conservation	\$22,420
Constituency mobilization	\$16,324
Fundraising	\$1,211
Management and general	\$5,865
Total Expenses	\$45,820
Change in net assets	\$3,999
Net assets, start of year	\$41,145
Net Assets, End of the Year	\$45,144



Dollars are in thousands.



GRIZZLY BEAR | © URSULA DUBRICK/FSTOP FOUNDATION

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THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SUPPORT DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE and protect our imperiled wildlife. To learn more or donate, contact us at **1-800-385-9712**, visit defenders.org/donate or choose one of the following options.

- Transfer appreciated assets directly to Defenders and maximize potential tax benefits. [Defenders.org/donate-stocks-help-save-wildlife](https://defenders.org/donate-stocks-help-save-wildlife)
- Become a **Leadership Council** member with a single donation of \$1,000 or more and enjoy more personal involvement with Defenders. [Defenders.org/leadershipcouncil](https://defenders.org/leadershipcouncil)
- If you are 70.5 or older, roll over a portion of your **IRA** to benefit wildlife. Remember, these gifts must come directly from your IRA account. [Defenders.org/planned-giving/gifts-your-retirement-plan](https://defenders.org/planned-giving/gifts-your-retirement-plan)
- Get started on a contribution from your **donor-advised fund**. [Defenders.org/donor-advised-funds](https://defenders.org/donor-advised-funds)
- Check with your personnel office or that of your spouse/partner about your company's **Corporate Matching Gifts** program or visit us at [Defenders.org/matching](https://defenders.org/matching).
- Become a **Wildlife Circle** member with a donation of \$100 to \$999 and be a key partner in our work to protect wolves and other wildlife.
- Join Defenders' **Wildlife Guardians**, our monthly giving program, and make your donations easily and automatically through a credit card or checking account. [Defenders.org/wildlifeguardians](https://defenders.org/wildlifeguardians)
- Ask about **EarthShare** where you work and designate Defenders of Wildlife (CFC #10624) for all or part of your gift.
- Include Defenders as a beneficiary in your will, living trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy or other estate plan, and leave a lasting mark on wildlife and the world by helping us continue our conservation work. You can specify that Defenders receives a certain percentage, dollar amount or residuary share of your estate. To include Defenders in your will or other estate plans, provide the following language to your professional advisor: "I bequeath (percentage, residuary share or specific amount or asset) to Defenders of Wildlife (Tax ID: 53-0183181), 1130 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036." We can also help you structure life income gifts such as charitable gift annuities or charitable trusts that support wildlife while providing income and tax advantages for you and your loved ones. Call us at **1-800-915-6789**, email legacy@defenders.org or visit: defenders.org/legacy.



FLORIDA PANTHER © JOOREBBIN/STOCKPHOTO



DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE is a national nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection of all native wild animals and plants in their natural communities.

Jamie Rappaport Clark
President & CEO

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