



# LANDS WATERS WILDLIFE TRIBAL

*2022 Annual Report*



## RECENT VICTORIES

Thanks to your support, we continue to advance our mission of working with all people to protect the lands, waters, and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, now and for future generations. We do this across more than 20 million acres, three states, two national parks, and in partnership with over 49 Tribes who have past and present ancestral and cultural connections to this region.

### Two Inter-Tribal Gatherings

hosted by the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes of the Wind River Indian Reservation, with GYC, successfully brought together federal agencies, Tribes, and nonprofits to mark Yellowstone's 150th anniversary and discuss the future of conservation in Greater Yellowstone.



### Zero grizzly bears

were lethally removed from a previous conflict hotspot due to a collaborative and innovative partnership between GYC, the National Wildlife Federation, the Property and Environment Research Center, and a rancher. We helped acquire a grazing allotment in exchange for measurable efforts to prevent conflicts and limit mortality between bears and livestock.

Photo: YNP Superintendent Cam Sholly with GTNP Superintendent Chip Jenkins recognize GYC Senior Wind River Conservation Associate Wes Martel with a medal during the closing ceremony of the Inter-Tribal Gathering on the Wind River Indian Reservation. © Emmy Reed/GYC

### One innovative partnership

supported by GYC is now formalized between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the State of Wyoming to significantly expand funding – more than \$20 million – for conservation of migratory big game habitat in Wyoming.

### 75 acres of critical habitat

in Emigrant Gulch once slated for a gold mine is now permanently protected and in public ownership thanks to a completed purchase agreement between GYC and the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

### 112 Yellowstone bison

were successfully transferred to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation to finish quarantine before being rehomed to Tribal lands across North America. This was the largest transfer to date, a trend we aim to repeat with the expanded Yellowstone Conservation and Transfer Program facility expansion completed by GYC, Yellowstone Forever, and YNP.

### 160 miles of secure habitat

for grizzly bears and other wildlife is now restored on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest through a partnership with GYC and the Forest Service to decommission illegal roads on forest lands.

### License Plate Supports GYC

We are pleased to report our Montana license plate, introduced in 2016 and sold through the Montana Motor Vehicle Division, has provided **more than \$135,000** in valuable support over the past seven years. Thank you to those who have purchased a plate and helped fund our important work.



## A 40-YEAR LEGACY

What a year it's been in Greater Yellowstone. Last June, we were shocked by the unprecedented flooding in our region, and then inspired by Yellowstone Superintendent Cam Sholly's ability to reopen the entire park in a remarkably short four months. Fast forward to January, we celebrated the transfer of 112 Yellowstone bison to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation as we watched an emotional video taken by GYC staff of the animals thundering across the prairie of northern Montana. And as we go to press, we are in the middle of announcing an ambitious and critical campaign to extinguish the last significant mining threat on the border of Yellowstone National Park.

Our first feature story outlines GYC's effort to stop yet another gold mine proposed on the northern border of the world's first national park. We've been quietly working behind the scenes over the past three years to create an opportunity to put an end to this potentially toxic and destructive project. With your help, we have a chance to buy out the mining company and permanently protect Yellowstone's northern border once and for all. This is a legacy project for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, building on the organization's long history of safeguarding the park from risky gold mines. To be successful, we need people like you, who care deeply about Yellowstone and its wild character, to help us reach our fundraising goal by October 1, 2023.

In June, we'll be celebrating our 40th anniversary in Bozeman, Montana, with many of you whose support has carried us to this milestone. We still have tickets left, so for those who wish to join us, please do! It promises to be a wonderful evening on the banks of the Gallatin River. For those unable to join us, consider going online and taking part in our virtual silent auction. Anyone can bid on items starting May 31st, and the money we raise will help us stop the mine.

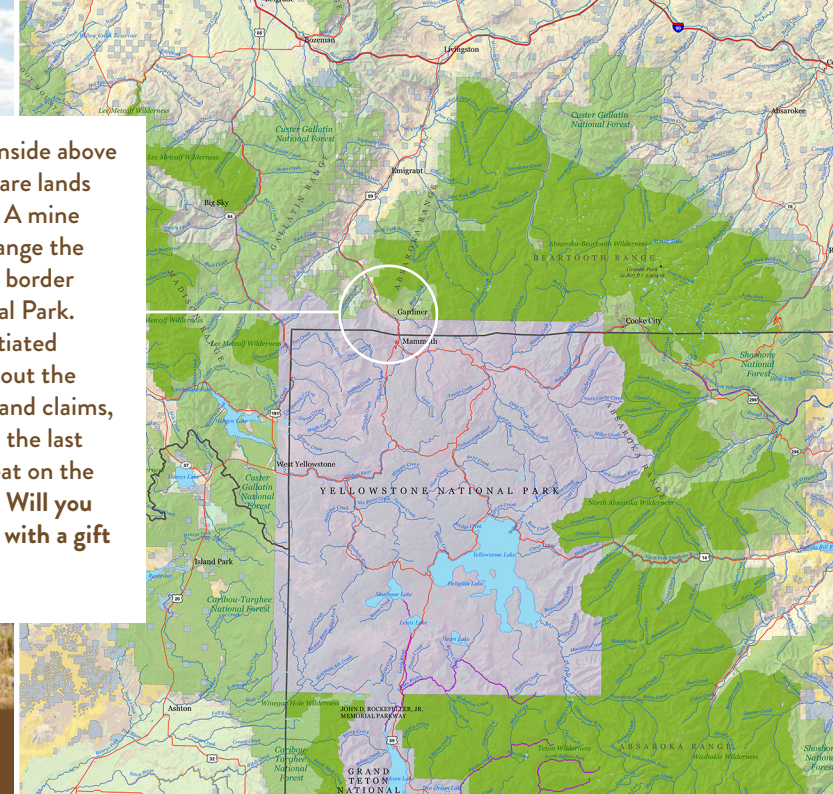
On the heels of a year filled with conservation wins, the next 12-months promise to be a monumental period for GYC and our work to conserve Greater Yellowstone. From extinguishing a gold mine to protecting wildlife migration corridors to continued advocacy for bison conservation and restoration, GYC's 32 staff will be working every day to protect what we all love about this spectacular place.

I am humbled by your steadfast support. You are the engine behind every effort we undertake on behalf of the lands, waters, and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Thank you.



Scott Christensen  
*Executive Director*





Perched on a mountainside above the Yellowstone River are lands slated for a gold mine. A mine here would forever change the landscape right on the border of Yellowstone National Park. GYC has quietly negotiated with the miner to buy out the mineral rights, leases, and claims, and forever extinguish the last remaining mining threat on the border of Yellowstone. Will you help us stop this mine with a gift to this legacy project?



*Program Spotlight*

# Legacy project aims to stop Yellowstone boundary gold mine

In 2019, you helped us pass the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act, shielding 30,370 acres of public land from destructive gold mining north of Yellowstone National Park. The legislation, along with a win in Montana's Supreme Court, put an end to a proposed gold mine on the east side of Montana's famed Paradise Valley.

While we celebrated this remarkable achievement, a second gold mine proposed on private lands and perched on a mountainside above the Yellowstone River and the town of Gardiner, Montana, continued moving forward. For the past three years, GYC has quietly worked to stop this mine, too. And we've come a long way.

The mine site is on Crevice Mountain, which rises directly above the Yellowstone River, and touches the

northern border of Yellowstone. The area provides vital habitat for grizzly bears; is a critical migration corridor for elk, mule deer, and bighorn sheep; and is one of the few designated places outside the park where Yellowstone bison can roam.

There is no question this mine would threaten the beloved lands, waters, and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Heavy machinery traffic and noise would carry across the park's tranquil lands, and mining activity visible for miles would spoil the chance for tens of millions of people to know what it feels like to experience Yellowstone's true, wild nature. The checkered history of gold mining in the West tells us the potential for a spill or acid mine drainage poisoning the Yellowstone River and its renowned fishery is very real.

Thankfully, GYC's efforts have created an extraordinary opportunity to prevent mining on Yellowstone's border once and for all.

After years of dogged advocacy and negotiations, GYC signed an agreement with Crevice Mining Group, LLC, the company proposing the gold mine. The agreement gives GYC a window of opportunity to purchase the mineral rights, leases, and claims covering 1,368 acres on Yellowstone's boundary.

Since last October, we've been working behind the scenes to raise the \$6.25 million needed to buy out the mining company. We have until October 1, 2023, to raise the funds and we're more than halfway there. We are also negotiating with willing landowners on Crevice Mountain to secure more than 300 acres of private land in-holdings. Our ultimate goal is to facilitate the transfer of these critical lands to the Custer Gallatin National Forest where they will be permanently protected

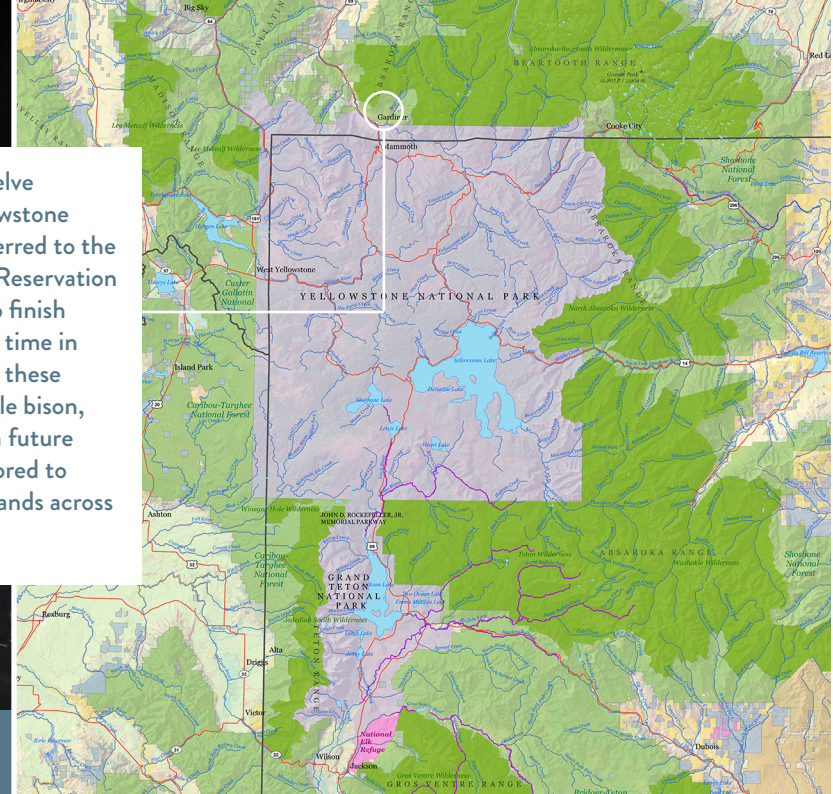
under provisions in the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act. Once this signature project is complete, we will have extinguished the last remaining threat of gold mining on the border on Yellowstone National Park forever.

We can't do this without you. Please help us raise the necessary funds by October 1 with an additional gift to this legacy project. Campaign information, including maps and fundraising progress, can be found at [greateryellowstone.org/yellowstone-mine](http://greateryellowstone.org/yellowstone-mine).



  
**Yellowstone is more valuable than gold. Help us meet our fundraising goal by October 1. Please consider an additional gift today.**  
*Thank you!*





One hundred twelve disease-free Yellowstone bison were transferred to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation earlier this year to finish out their required time in quarantine. Soon, these genetically valuable bison, and many more in future years, will be restored to Tribal and public lands across North America.

*Program Spotlight*

## Success! Largest Yellowstone bison transfer to Fort Peck

Yellowstone’s wild bison are icons of the American West, providing a glimpse back in time to an age when vast herds roamed across North America.

These remarkable animals are widely considered the last truly wild herd of American plains bison in existence. Their lives are still shaped by natural forces such as predation, harsh winters, a vast and varied landscape, and complex herd dynamics.

As ecosystem engineers, bison shape the very landscape they roam – managing and manipulating plant life, augmenting soil health, and nourishing the ecosystem. They play a vital ecological role in keeping Yellowstone in dynamic balance.

Their genetic significance is unparalleled; while most bison across America carry significant cattle DNA in their genome,

Yellowstone bison are the most genetically intact in existence, with over 99.7 percent genetic purity according to the latest research.

Yellowstone bison are also inextricably tied to the Native people and cultures that shared the landscape with them for millennia, long before the arrival of European settlers.

The roughly 5,000 bison who call Yellowstone home today are descendants of just two dozen individuals that found refuge in the park’s rugged interior while European settlers and the American military systematically exterminated millions of bison through overhunting and an intentional act of war against the Tribes that depended on the species.

With a healthy Yellowstone population poised to lead the way, GYC and our partners are helping restore these iconic animals to appropriate

public and Tribal lands across North America through the Yellowstone Conservation Transfer Program.

Before Yellowstone bison can be transferred to Tribal and public lands, they must first go through a multi-step quarantine process to ensure they are disease-free. Limited space at the existing quarantine facility was restricting the number of bison that could enter the program, so in 2022, GYC joined Yellowstone National Park and Yellowstone Forever to nearly triple the size of the facility. Shortly thereafter, we witnessed the largest bison transfer to date. On January 26, 2023, 112 Yellowstone bison were sent to the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in northern Montana, including seven bulls, 53 cows, and 52 calves.

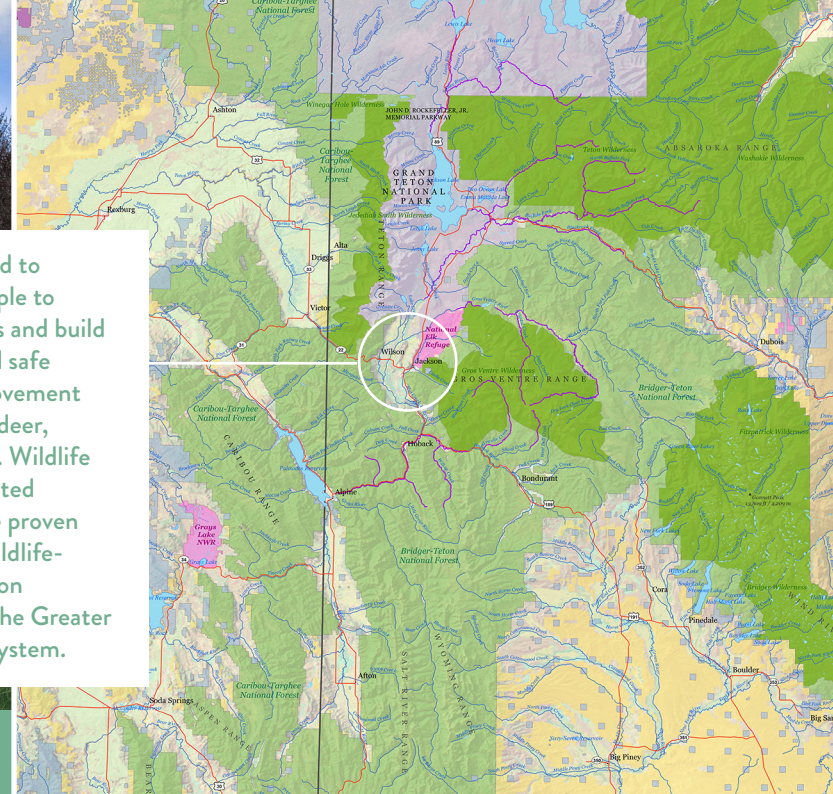
These disease-free bison will finish their final year of quarantine on the reservation before being distributed to Tribal and public lands across North America. Because of this transfer and the recent facility expansion, Yellowstone was also able to enter an additional 282 bison into the program this winter. As a result, hundreds

more bison have the potential to be diverted from slaughter and, if found to be disease-free, will be transferred to Fort Peck. This pipeline of genetically valuable Yellowstone bison will create new herds across North America and provide meaning, connection, education, cultural revitalization, economic benefits, and healing to Tribal communities. This innovative and proactive approach to bison conservation and management is just one way we are helping to protect this remarkable iconic species now, and in the future.

View the compelling video and read our inspirational blog about this transfer: [greateryellowstone.org/bison](https://greateryellowstone.org/bison). 🐃







We are committed to working with people to develop new ideas and build consensus around safe migration and movement corridors for elk, deer, moose, and more. Wildlife crossings and related infrastructure are proven ways to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on roadways across the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

## Program Spotlight

# Wildlife crossing projects move forward

Healthy, robust herds of elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn are treasured by all of us who reside in or visit the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. As these animals move across the landscape, they are a symbol of the wide-open spaces and undeveloped lands that make this region so remarkable.

Roadways create significant barriers for wildlife as they traverse the landscape during daily movements and seasonal migrations. Individual animals killed by collisions with vehicles is a harsh reality, but the greater threat is entire herds being cut off from their seasonal ranges. When wildlife cannot cross critical winter and summer ranges because of barriers such as roads, herd populations can significantly decline. Animals attempting to cross roadways also pose a major threat to human safety. Wildlife-vehicle collisions are dangerous and

costly for people and wildlife alike.

This is why the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, thanks to your generous support, is working steadily to ensure wildlife crossing structures are being built in key areas throughout Greater Yellowstone.

After three years of detailed planning and consensus building with community members to meet their needs and vision, the Snake River Bridge replacement and reconstruction project, at the intersection of Wyoming Highway 22 and Highway 390 near Wilson, Wyoming, has broken ground. It is slated for completion in 2025.

Four wildlife crossing structures will be installed in this key migration corridor and wildlife-vehicle collision hotspot. Two will be funded through Teton County's Specific Purpose Excise Tax (SPET), which was

successfully appropriated to highway crossing projects thanks in large part to GYC and its partners encouraging residents to vote for wildlife crossings back in 2019. The other two crossings are funded through the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

We are also working to address another wildlife-vehicle collision hotspot – the 24-mile Teton Pass corridor – which bisects two large wild landscapes and where Wyoming Highway 22 connects Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and Teton Valley, Idaho. Moose, elk, and mule deer move regularly throughout the area and often find themselves crossing this busy roadway. According to the Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation's citizen-collected data from 1991 to 2020, 439 wildlife-vehicle collisions were documented on Teton Pass.

Because the highway is an economic artery for western Wyoming and eastern Idaho, and the area provides year-round recreation opportunities, thousands of people and cars traverse the pass daily, creating hardships for

our treasured wildlife. The good news is professional engineers are looking at a range of options for transportation infrastructure, trailhead development, and wildlife crossing structures to improve transportation safety in this robust and busy thoroughfare. Rest assured, GYC will be reviewing and advocating for comprehensive plans that transcend state boundaries and support wildlife migration and movement.

Wildlife crossing structures — both overpasses and underpasses and their associated fences — are reliable, long-term solutions for reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions. Your support means we are creating safer roads for both people and wildlife. Thank you. 🦌







We are committed to the long game, which means we must continue to work creatively to build local support and cultivate relationships with the citizens and decision makers within our three state governments.

*Program Spotlight*

## State legislatures wrap up

Another legislative session has wrapped up in Greater Yellowstone. As this report goes to press, Montana has just finished its session, while Idaho and Wyoming’s sessions closed in early April and early March, respectively. Across all three states, GYC’s advocacy team worked with Tribal and nonprofit partners to monitor and respond to proposed legislation aimed at the region’s lands, waters, and wildlife.

In Wyoming, we focused on introducing our new staff to decision makers, agency personnel, and other leaders in Cheyenne, and monitored bills throughout the session. In Idaho, the session was relatively quiet on our issues, which ended up being a good thing because Montana kept us very busy.

GYC’s Montana legislative strategy focused primarily on proposed wildlife bills. In this year’s session, much like last year’s, state lawmakers put forward a slate of regressive

and unscientific bills aimed at bears, wolves, bison, and more. We worked closely with partners on our legislative advocacy by coordinating strategies on providing testimony, writing letters to the governor, taking a supportive research role when useful, and asking our Montana-based supporters to contact their state senators and representatives on several specific bills.

In today’s world, legislative sessions can be divisive and difficult. Regardless of the outcomes, we are committed to finding a better path forward and continuing to work with the wide range of people who care about this region.

The following highlights some of the biggest wins and losses in Montana:

Senate Bill 295, which pertains to grizzly bear management, is sitting on the Governor’s desk awaiting his expected signature as this report went to print despite strong opposition

from GYC and a number of our key partners. This bill, which will go into effect if grizzly bears are removed from federal protections under the Endangered Species Act, allows citizen take of grizzly bears in the act of threatening livestock or personal safety based on their presence near dwellings. The way the bill is written, it contains far too much ambiguity that could lead to increased grizzly bear mortality across Montana.

House Bill 971 addresses climate change considerations within the Montana Environmental Policy Act. This bill is also sitting on the Governor’s desk awaiting his expected signature despite oppositional testimony that far outweighed the support of a handful of industry proponents favoring the legislation. If it becomes law, the bill will repeal the analysis and regulation required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) for significant projects that could harm the environment and climate. The weakening of Montana’s most important environmental law will be triggered if the Montana Supreme Court ever

rules finds state agencies must consider climate impacts when evaluating projects that need state permits.

Thankfully a handful of other bad bills, including three bills that would have negatively affected wolves and black bears, missed the transmittal deadline and died before continuing through the legislature.

Overall, it was a disappointing if not unsurprising legislative session in Montana. As we have for forty years, GYC will continue to work with partners, as well as our in-region supporters, to speak up for the lands, waters, and wildlife of Greater Yellowstone in the state policy arenas. It’s a long game to be sure, and we won’t give up. Your support makes all the difference. 🐾





# Celebrating Forty Years



Join us next month, either online or in person, as we celebrate 40 years of conservation success and raise critical funds for future work.

40th Celebration Event  
Wednesday, June 7, 2023  
5:30 - 9:30 PM  
Bozeman, Montana

Can't join us? Read below for how you can participate via our online auction.

## VIEW GYC'S ONLINE AUCTION STARTING MAY 17, 2023, BIDDING STARTS MAY 31.

Help us celebrate 40 years and support our work by participating in our online silent auction! With chances to win incredible prizes generously donated by businesses and artisans from around the region, there's something for everyone. Below is a sneak peek of some of the items:

- Overnight stay at Yellowstone National Park's Canyon Lodge with Roosevelt Cookout (Fair Market Value: \$900), donated by Xanterra
- 2-day Upper Yellowstone River Float with Sweetwater Travel and overnight stay at Chico Hot Springs in Pray, Montana (Fair Market Value: \$1,800), donated by Sweetwater Travel and Chico Hot Springs
- 5-Night stay at a Modern Teton Mountain Home in Victor, Idaho (Fair Market Value: \$1,000-\$1,500, depending on season), donated by Michael Gadsden, GYC Board Member
- Custom, Design-Your-Own Palm Leaf Hat from Cofer Hat Company (Fair Market Value: \$100), donated by John Cofer, Cofer Hat Company
- "Indian Paintbrush" Elk Hide 16" Drum with Mallet (Fair Market Value: \$400), donated by Kaycee Kalahar, Folk Elements
- 3D Layered Bison Sculpture (Fair Market Value: \$160), donated by Rising Joy Creations
- Maven C.1 10X42 Binoculars (Value: \$425), donated by Maven Outdoor Equipment Co.



YNP's Canyon Lodge



Elk hide drum

EVENT AND AUCTION DETAILS: [GREATERYELLOWSTONE.ORG/EVENTS/40](https://www.greateryellowstone.org/events/40)

# Stories & Science on our Podcast



The *Voices of Greater Yellowstone* podcast is produced, written, and hosted by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition's talented Emmy Reed and Kristin Oxford. Each episode connects thousands of people to the region's conservation programs and scientific points of interest requested by our listeners.

You, too, can listen on the GYC website, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts. Hear unique stories, get insider takes on living here, and learn about our efforts to conserve the remarkable Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. [greateryellowstone.org/podcast](https://www.greateryellowstone.org/podcast)

## OVERVIEW OF GYC PODCASTS

GYC's popular podcast is published about once a month throughout the year. Tune in and learn more about the lands, waters, wildlife, and people of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

### EPISODE 14 | MAY THE FOREST BE WITH YOU

The beautiful, unbroken forests found in Greater Yellowstone are an integral part of the ecosystem's overall health and vitality. With five national forests and tens of millions of acres of wild lands; clean, cold water; and habitat for our treasured wildlife, learn what we are doing to protect them with GYC's Teddy Collins.

### EPISODE 13 | THE VITAL ROLE OF WHITEBARK PINE

Whitebark pine trees can live upwards of 1,000 years, and are often the highest elevation pines you'll find in Greater Yellowstone. Learn why they are important to the overall health of ecosystem with Montana State University's Dr. Danielle Ulrich.

Additional episodes include:

- **EPISODE 12 | NORTHERN ARAPAHO CULTURAL PRESERVATION** featuring THPO Crystal C'Bearing
- **EPISODE 11 | RESEARCH AND RESCUE IN TETON COUNTY** featuring volunteer Jenn Sparks
- **EPISODE 10 | WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM** featuring GYC's Shana Drimal
- **EPISODE 9 | YELLOWSTONE'S RESILIENT COUGARS** featuring YNP wildlife biologist Daniel Stahler
- **EPISODE 8 | THE BOLD ART OF YELLOWSTONE** featuring Indigenous artist DG House
- **EPISODE 7 | TRIBAL RIGHTS AND YELLOWSTONE'S 150TH** featuring GYC's Wes Martel
- **EPISODE 6 | ELK IN PARADISE** featuring GYC's Blakeley Adkins
- **EPISODE 5 | YELLOWSTONE ROCKS! GEOLOGY & VOLCANOLOGY** featuring scientist Dr. Lisa Morgan
- **EPISODE 4 | WILDLIFE MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT** featuring Wyoming's Chris Colligan
- **EPISODE 3 | CLIMATE CHANGE & THE GYE** featuring paleoclimatologist Dr. Cathy Whitlock
- **EPISODE 2 | WELCOME TO GRIZZLY BEAR COUNTRY** featuring GYC's Brooke Shifrin
- **EPISODE 1 | DEFENDING MONTANA'S WILD RIVERS** featuring GYC's Charles Drimal

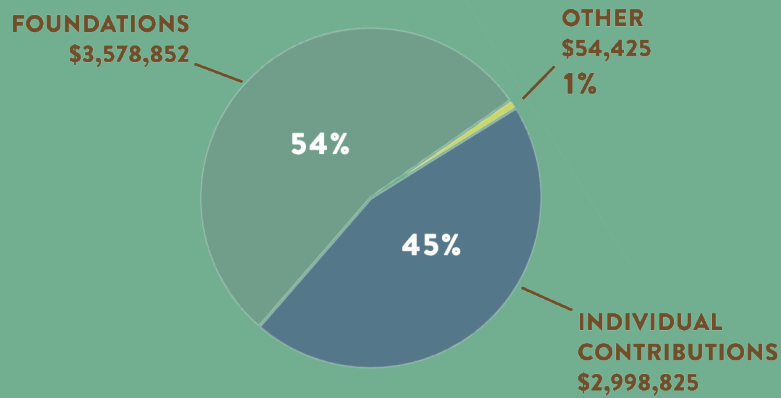


# FINANCIALS

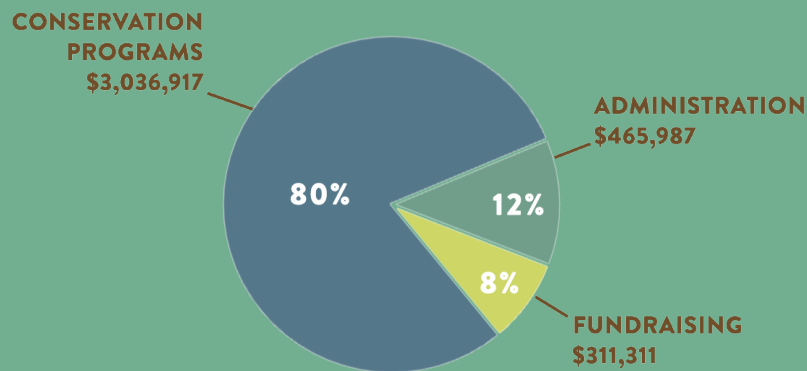
Our financial sustainability is due to generous gifts, bequests, sustaining donations, events, and restricted funding for key campaigns and projects within the ecosystem. This generosity allows us to think bigger, and make lasting investments in our work now, and in the future.

If you'd like additional information, please see our audited financial statements and 990s on our website at [greateryellowstone.org/financials](http://greateryellowstone.org/financials).

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition's volunteer Board of Directors is comprised of dedicated volunteers who bring a broad array of leadership, expertise, and enthusiasm to protecting the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Dan Wen, Chair	Bea Gordon	Xavier Rolet
Nancy Watters, Vice Chair	Kitty Griswold	Diana Simmons
Andrew Moore, Treasurer	Thomas Jalkut	Jane Spencer
Thomas Winston, Secretary	Chris Johns	Georgie Stanley
Pete Coppelillo	Rick Johnson	Dan Vermillion
Abi Devan	Janet Offensend	Jennifer Wilson
Michael Gadsden	Mei Ratz	Ted Turner, Emeritus

## NATIONAL COUNCIL

The National Council brings together a core group of supporters who help advance the mission of and provide leadership to support GYC as the organization continues to strengthen its programs and initiatives. Through their dedication of time, energy, and financial resources, council members assist in protecting Greater Yellowstone.

Andrea Bent	Cindy McCollum	Kuni Schmeitzler
Beth Burrough	Bill Moliski	Kathy Sinclair
Swep Davis	Chris Naumann	John Spellman
Peggy and James Graeter	GINNA NAYLOR	David Spencer
John Heminway	Ed Orazem	Jim Spencer
Ned Jannotta	Charlie O'Reilly	Robert Steinwurtzel
Beedee Ladd	Jim Potter	Geoff Stephens
Ken Lichtendahl	Dan Sarles	Lisa Volgenau
Sandy Martin	Stephen Sayre	

Charity Navigator



FOUR-STAR

Attaining a 4-star "exceptional" rating verifies the Greater Yellowstone Coalition exceeds non-profit industry standards. Only 16% of charities evaluated have received at least seven consecutive 4-star ratings in a row, which means the Greater Yellowstone Coalition outperforms most other charities in America.

Greater Yellowstone Coalition Tax ID: 81-0414042

Charity Navigator is the nation's largest evaluator of charities. They provide ratings for over 5,000 American charities based on Financial Health, Accountability, and Transparency.



# MATCH OPPORTUNITY TO STOP MINE, PROTECT HABITAT ON YELLOWSTONE'S BORDER

Mennen Environmental Foundation will match any gift, dollar for dollar, up to \$50,000 to help GYC stop a proposed gold mine on the border of Yellowstone National Park. Help us protect critical habitat for grizzly bears and other wildlife with an urgent gift today!

[greateryellowstone.org/mine](http://greateryellowstone.org/mine)  
or call Melissa at 406.586.1593

**BLOG**

[greateryellowstone.org/blog](http://greateryellowstone.org/blog)

**EMAILS**

[greateryellowstone.org/signup](mailto:greateryellowstone.org/signup)

**ANNUAL REPORTS**

[greateryellowstone.org/financials](http://greateryellowstone.org/financials)

**PODCAST**

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