



Photo: Josh Duplechian

THE CONSERVATION ALLIANCE Grantee Update

In April 2017, The Conservation Alliance invested \$850,000 in grassroots conservation organizations. Each grant went to a project working to secure permanent protection for a specific threatened wild place. We direct organizations to use our funding over the course of a 12-month period. At the end of the grant period, we ask each group for a 12-month final report. These reports play a key role in helping us determine the return on our investment.

On April 1, we received 21 final reports. Following is a summary of the progress our grantees have made with our funding. At the end of this summary are several exciting updates on work we funded in October 2017. We will share final reports on all of our October 2017 grants in October 2018.

Final Reports from April 2017 Grantees



ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE

We funded Alaska Wilderness League's *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Defense Campaign* to defend the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling, and lay the foundation to permanently protect the area in the future. AWL reports that Congress passed legislation, buried in the tax cut bill, that opens the Coastal Plain to oil drilling. The League will now focus its attention on impeding oil drilling on the Coastal Plain by pushing legislation to overturn the drilling portion of the tax cut legislation, using litigation to delay or halt any oil development in the Arctic Refuge, and implementing a corporate accountability campaign to pressure oil companies not to bid on drilling leases in the Refuge.



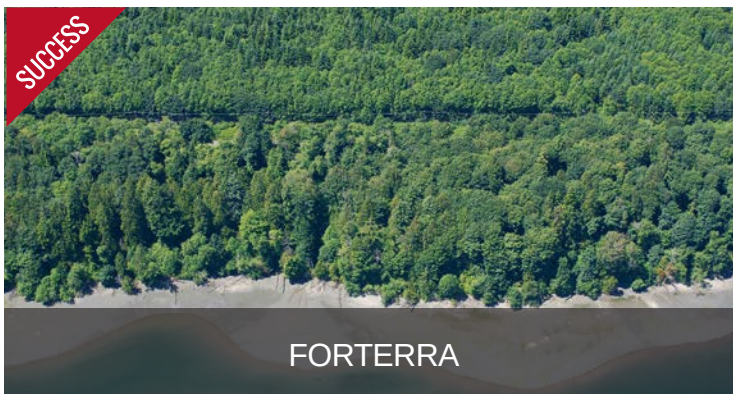
CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS COALITION

We supported CWC's *Northwest California Mountains and Rivers* and *Central Coast Heritage Protection Campaigns* to pass two bills covering public lands on California's North and Central coasts that together protect 608,500 acres of Wilderness and 690 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers; establish two new recreation trails; restore more than 500,000 acres of public lands; and designate 34,500 acres in two new scenic areas. CWC reports that Senator Kamala Harris and Representative Salud Carbajal have introduced legislation for the Central Coast protections into the Senate and House respectively. Representative Jared Huffman has drafted a bill for the Northwest California protections, and plans to introduce the legislation before Summer 2018.



CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Our grant supported CPAWS' *Protecting the Bay of Fundy Campaign* to secure three new Marine Protected Areas covering the internationally-significant Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. These protections would ensure that the Bay functions as a resilient ecosystem, where areas of high conservation and ecological value are protected from industrial development and exploitation. CPAWS reports that the Canadian federal government will release its plan for new Marine Protected Areas this Spring, which will likely include protections for the Bay of Fundy. Following the release, the government will hold a three-to-six-month public comment period, which will lead to a final MPA plan by the end of 2018.



FORTERRA

Forterra used our funding for its *Kitsap Forest and Bay Community Campaign* to save the 3,000-acre Port Gamble Forest, which includes more than 65 miles of recreational trails and sits uphill from a previously conserved 1.5-mile stretch of critical shoreline habitat. The group sent good news that they have completed the final 1,500-acre acquisition. This acquisition completes a decade-long project to conserve more than 4,000 acres, and the outdoor recreation opportunities that lie within.

SUCCESS: 1,500 Acres Protected



GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION

We supported GYC's *Teton Public Lands Campaign* to permanently protect 100,000-200,000 acres of wild public lands in Wyoming and Idaho through Wilderness and other designations such as National Recreation Areas and National Conservation Areas. This effort is driven by counties in Wyoming that want to solidify designations for federal lands in those counties. The initiative has faced many obstacles, as opponents of protected lands – ranging from motorized recreation enthusiasts to Wyoming's Congresswoman Liz Cheney – have mobilized to undermine the county process. GYC sees a window of opportunity for success, particularly in Teton County, and will continue to work with stakeholders to advocate for legislated land protections.



METHOW VALLEY CITIZENS COUNCIL

We funded Methow Valley Citizens Council's *Methow Headwaters Campaign* to secure a permanent mineral withdrawal for 340,000 acres of National Forest land in the headwaters of the Methow Valley, protecting the upper Methow Valley from the threat of industrial-scale mining forever. The Interior Department imposed a two-year moratorium on any mining activity in the area, which expires at the end of 2018. Interior has initiated a process to consider a 5-20-year mineral withdrawal, which should conclude with a decision by December 30th. At the same time, Washington Senators Murray and Cantwell have introduced legislation for a permanent mineral withdrawal. Republican Congressman Dan Newhouse has expressed support for the withdrawal.



NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

NWF used our funding to support their *Connecting the Upper Rio Grande Campaign* to engage in Forest Service and BLM management planning to secure administrative protection for 230,000 acres of wild places in a connected landscape that supports vast recreational opportunities and critical wildlife corridors. NWF reports that a coalition of conservation groups has successfully advocated for protecting 354,000 acres of land and six river miles in two Forest Service plans in New Mexico and Colorado. The Forest Service is due to release draft plans later this year, with final plans approved in 2019.



NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL LAND TRUST

NCCLT used our funding to support their *Waters of the Waccamaw Campaign* to protect 3,000 acres of land and 7.5 river miles along the Waccamaw River in North Carolina, and promote public outdoor recreation along this spectacular waterway. NCCLT reports that they have raised \$5.5 million toward the \$6.4 million they need to complete the purchase. The group anticipates that they will close on the acquisition in June 2018.



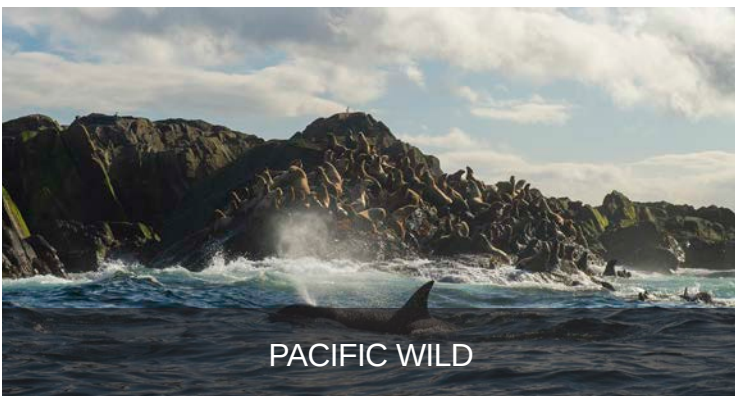
We supported NCLC's *Rainforest Reserve Project* to permanently protect 3,500 acres of forest on the north Oregon coast preserving an entire coastal watershed from the headwaters to the ocean, and creating a contiguous conservation corridor of more than 29 square miles linking land and sea. The Conservancy has signed a purchase agreement for the entire property, and plans to complete the acquisition in 2021. This effort has opened the door for NCLC to acquire an additional 1,500 acres adjacent to the current parcel.



Oregon Wild used our funding to support its *State Scenic Waterways Campaign* to seize the opportunity at the state level to protect iconic and threatened Oregon rivers as State Scenic Waterways, while continuing to build a pro-conservation base of support among key decision-makers and the public. Oregon Wild reports that Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has said publicly that they will recommend that the Nehalem River be designated as a State Scenic Waterway this year. The designation could be complete as early as Spring 2019. Oregon Wild will then work to advocate similar protections for the South Umpqua River.



OA used our funding for its *Protecting North Carolina's Mountain Treasures Campaign* to secure 20-30 years of improved management for the 1.1 million acres of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests in North Carolina including agency protections for 48,000 acres along 31 new eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers, and 70,000 acres of recommended Wilderness, and to lay the groundwork for Congressional designations for these special places and others on the forests. OA reports that the draft plan is due this Summer, followed by a public comment period, which will give people the opportunity to support new protections in the plan.



We supported Pacific Wild's *Marine Protected Areas Campaign* to protect at least five percent of Canada's Great Bear Sea as effectively-regulated Marine Protected Areas designated by First Nations, provincial and federal governments, with the long-term goal to protect a minimum of ten percent by 2020, and at least 30 percent by 2025. Pacific Wild has played a key role in developing compelling communications assets to support new MPAs during the federal government's current review process. The group expects the government to announce candidate MPAs in March 2019.



RED RIVER GORGE CLIMBERS' COALITION

RRGCC used our grant for its *Bald Rock Recreational Preserve Campaign* to protect the spectacular cliffline, world-class climbing, and natural beauty of the 102-acre Bald Rock Recreational Preserve from the threat of private development. RRGCC reports that they have purchased the property, and have until 2021 to repay the loan they secured to complete the purchase.



SAVE THE REDWOODS LEAGUE

We funded Save the Redwoods League's *Protecting the Giants of Giant Sequoia National Monument Campaign* to acquire 160 acres of private property within California's Giant Sequoia National Monument. The effort will preserve the last remaining unprotected area in the entire 65,000-acre South Fork Tule River Watershed, eliminating the threat of development and logging of the world's largest trees, and expanding recreational opportunities. The League reports that they have reached an agreement to purchase the 160-acre Red Hill property, which will protect ten percent of the remaining old-growth giant sequoias still in private ownership. The deal will close in June, 2018, and the property will be transferred to the National Park Service by 2020.



SIERRA CLUB, SANTA LUCIA CHAPTER

The Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club used our funding for its *Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary Campaign* to establish the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, permanently protecting a 140-mile stretch of California's Central Coastal waters. Though the Trump Administration is not supportive of the sanctuary designation, Sierra Club continues to build local support, anticipating an eventual shift in political opportunities. Representative Salud Carbajal has formally asked NOAA to initiate the designation process, and California's Secretary of Natural Resources has also endorsed the proposal.



SUCCESS

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF NORTH CAROLINA

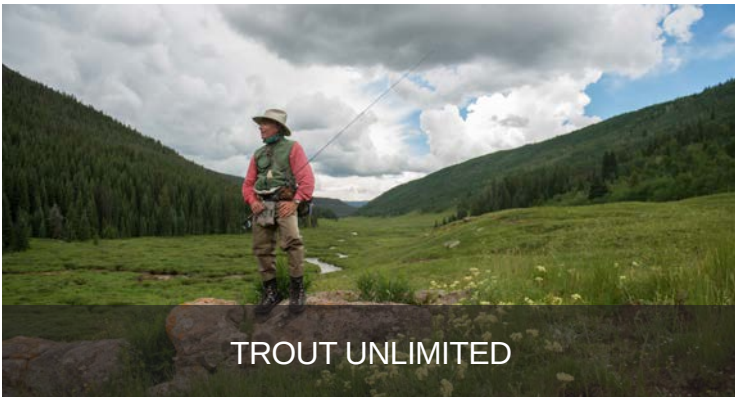
We funded TNC's *Squire Tract Acquisition Campaign* to permanently preserve 410.81 acres of land along the Black River including approximately 150 acres of old-growth cypress swamp forest and mature bottomland hardwoods, and transfer all of this land to the State of North Carolina to become part of a new state park to be developed on the Black River. TNC reports that they completed the acquisition, which includes 150 acres of old-growth cypress swamp and hardwood forests. The property is now part of TNC's 5,200-acre Black River Preserve.

SUCCESS: 410 Acres Protected



THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

We funded TRCP's *Montana Backcountry Conservation Campaign* to protect at least 100,000 acres of wild, publicly-owned lands in Montana by June, 2018 as Backcountry Conservation Areas (BCAs) through the BLM's Lewistown and Missoula Resource Management Plans, preserving them from future development. According to TRCP, the Lewistown RMP is delayed, but moving. The group is confident the RMP will include BCA designations for 100,000 acres of land. The Missoula RMP is moving more quickly, and has the potential to protect 46,500 acres as BCAs.



TROUT UNLIMITED

Our grant supported TU's *Sportsmen for Public Lands Campaign* to engage hunters and anglers to ensure that America's public land estate, including 640 million acres and 124 national monuments, is not diminished by Congress and the Trump Administration, and the Antiquities Act remains an effective tool for landscape conservation. TU reports that their efforts added significant opposition to Congressional and Trump Administration efforts to undermine protection for public lands throughout the US by organizing voices from the sportsmen community.



TROUT UNLIMITED ALASKA

TU Alaska used our funding for its *Protecting the Tongass Campaign* to secure permanent protection for 1.9 million acres, over 1000 miles of river and 40 lakes in the Tongass National Forest of Southeast Alaska. Additionally, they will defend the Tongass from privatization threats, and continue to advocate for reforming Tongass management to put fish first. TU celebrated the new Tongass Management Plan in 2016, which protected more than 70 watersheds covering 1.9 million acres. That plan was immediately threatened by the new administration, and members of Congress who see a new opportunity to reduce Tongass protections through legislation. TU reports that, so far, they have prevented any changes to the 2016 plan.



TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

TPL used our funding for its *Rolston Rest Conservation Campaign* to permanently protect the largest private inholding remaining in Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest, encompassing 2,792 acres of critical forest habitat, nationally significant hiking trails, and important aquatic resources. TPL reports solid progress on their effort to acquire the Rolston Rest property, and expects to complete the acquisition in 2019.



WRC used our funding for its *John Day River Campaign* to permanently protect at least 18,857 acres of rare riparian and shrubsteppe habitats in Oregon, and provide unparalleled recreational access to wild lands tracing at least 16 miles of the lower John Day River canyon and cold-water tributaries. WRC has secured an agreement to purchase the 2,825-acre Campbell Ranch later this year. Meanwhile, they expect to transfer 4,081 acres of the Rattray Ranch to BLM this spring, and will transfer the remainder of that property over the next 12 months.

Notable Updates from October 2017 Grantees



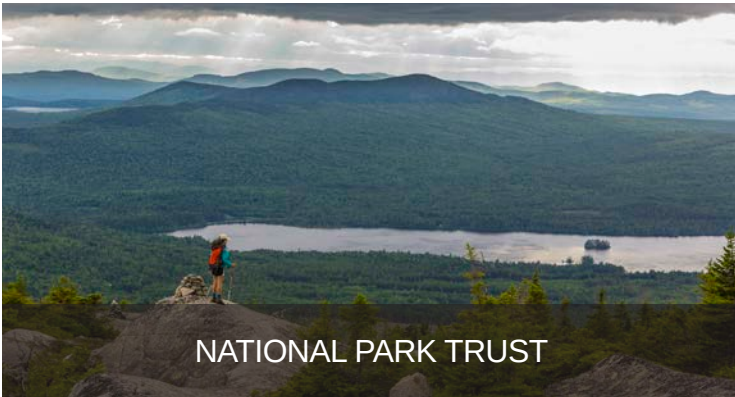
We supported Conservation Colorado's *Continental Divide Campaign* to pass the Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness and Camp Hale Legacy Act. On January 24, during the first Outdoor Retailer show in Denver, Representative Jared Polis and Senator Michael Bennet introduced the bill. The legislation seeks to permanently protect 90,000 acres of public lands in Colorado, including Wilderness and the country's first National Historic Landscape at Camp Hale.



We funded Friends of the Columbia Gorge's *Preserve the Wonder Campaign* to acquire seven unique properties, totaling 420 acres of land, in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Six of the seven properties have been acquired, and overall interest in this campaign has increased in the wake of the Eagle Creek Fire that burned 48,000 acres in the Columbia River Gorge in 2017.



We funded MWA's *Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project* to permanently protect 83,000 acres of habitat for threatened and endangered species and for recreation, through Wilderness additions to the Mission Mountains, Bob Marshall, and Scapegoat Wilderness Areas. In February, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing for the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act, an important step in the legislative process.



NATIONAL PARK TRUST

We funded NPT's effort to complete the Ridge Phase of the *Bald Mountain Pond Project*, a 1,495-acre land acquisition along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in Maine. In partnership with Trust for Public Land, NPT completed the acquisition, and the groups are working to transfer ownership of this forestland to the National Park Service later this year.



PARK COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

We funded PCEC's *Protecting Wild Lands and Waters of Yellowstone Gateway Campaign* to protect the Yellowstone Gateway from the threat of industrial-scale gold mining by securing a permanent mineral withdrawal that prevents mining activity in 30,000 acres of National Forest lands in the Absaroka Beartooth mountains. Following Senator Jon Tester's Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act introduction in April, 2017, newly elected Montana Representative Greg Gianforte introduced companion legislation to protect Yellowstone's Gateway into the House of Representatives in December.



VERMONT LAND TRUST

We funded VLT's *Richmond Town Forest Project* to acquire a 428-acre forest located one mile from the village center. VLT completed the 428-acre acquisition and created the Richmond Town Forest in March, 2018. A vital stretch of forestland and outdoor recreational opportunities in one of Vermont's most important blocks of contiguous wildlife habitat is now permanently protected for future generations to enjoy.

SUCCESS: 428 Acres Protected