

ENDANGERED **EARTH**



CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY • WINTER 2023

A VISION FOR THE WILD



Emperor penguins

WHAT AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR. In 2022 we won lifesaving protections for 45 species — including emperor penguins, lesser prairie chickens and Hermes copper butterflies — and safeguarded more than 2 million acres of wildlife habitat from coast to coast.

We curbed cattle grazing in the West, turned the tide on some awful pesticides, fought for climate progress from Washington, D.C., to the global meetings in Egypt, notched victories for wolves and bears, and won critical help for humpback whales. And just weeks ago we petitioned to reintroduce endangered jaguars to the Southwest.

At the Center we spend a lot of our time on the defensive, fighting to save the wild world from destruction again and again. It's more than a full-time job, and it never ends. But sometimes, even as we keep up that constant daily defense, we have to look past it to a more distant horizon — an expansive vision of what's possible. That wider and deeper vision inspires us, lifting us out of an everyday that can sometimes be a grind.

Bringing endangered species back to the places they've been driven out of, both for their own sake and to restore the natural integrity of the wild, is a crucial part of that vision. Rather than settling for a baseline that shifts every day, we have to have the courage to push for bold, ambitious changes as we defend every species we can.

We want to recover gray wolves, once abundant across the United States, to wherever there's still good habitat for them. We have to bring majestic grizzly bears back to California, where they now only remain as a nostalgic image on the state flag. And we need to restore jaguars — the largest wild cats in North America — to their ancestral range in the Southwest.

These incredible animals have been absent from too many places for too long. It's time to bring them home.

When it comes to saving life on Earth, it's not enough to stave off destruction of the wild — we also have to seek actively to extend and renew it. Thank you, as always, for being at our side.

A handwritten signature in white ink, reading "Kieran Suckling".

Kieran Suckling
Executive Director

2022 WHAT WE WON

ENDANGERED SPECIES

- Achieved lifesaving protections for 45 species under the Endangered Species Act, including lesser prairie chickens, magnificent ramshorn snails, foothill yellow-legged frogs and Hermes copper butterflies.
- Secured more than 2 million acres of critical habitat for 28 species, including Canoe Creek mussels, Louisiana pine snakes, eight Florida plants and Panama City crayfish.
- Fought tirelessly for endangered species by curbing blinding resort lights on Maui to help baby sea turtles and Hawaiian petrels; protecting diamondback terrapin turtles from crab traps; and pursuing protection for southern bog turtles, ghost orchids, Railroad Valley toads and other species on the brink.

PUBLIC LANDS

- In Nevada and California, secured a ban on livestock grazing across 33,000 acres in Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, a major win for sage grouse and other wild creatures ravaged by grazing.
- Launched the Climate Forests campaign, backed by more than 120 organizations, calling for the Biden administration to protect mature and old-growth forests from logging.
- In Arizona, kicked cattle off 100 miles of the wild and scenic Verde River and its tributaries and won a long-running court battle to protect over 30 miles of desert oasis in the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area from grazing.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- Won a decisive victory when a federal court ordered the Environmental Protection Agency to protect endangered pollinators like Fender's blue butterflies and rusty patched bumblebees from cyantraniliprole, a highly toxic insecticide.
- Working closely with indigenous youth, helped obtain and maintain an injunction against mega-factory farms for pigs in the Yucatan. And held first international anti-factory farming meeting with communities, tribal leaders and NGOs from across the Americas in Mexico.
- Obtained an important settlement forcing EPA to take smog threats seriously in Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, New York City, and Denver. This win secured added protection against asthma-causing air pollution for 27.5 million people as well as national parks and other natural areas.

CLIMATE LAW INSTITUTE

- Won a historic, decade-long fight to secure Endangered Species Act protection for emperor penguins jeopardized by sea-ice loss in Antarctica.
- Secured preliminary protection for California's Temblor legless lizard, a sand-swimming reptile in the southwestern San Joaquin Valley imperiled by oil and gas drilling.
- Fought for candy darters, brightly colored fish native to Appalachia put at risk by the Mountain Valley Pipeline. A court halted federal approval over the pipeline's impacts on the fish, but the fight goes on as Sen. Joe Manchin attempts to ram approval of the project through Congress.

ENERGY JUSTICE

- Pushed President Biden to use the Defense Production Act to jumpstart our clean energy transition and kept up the pressure urging Biden to use his climate emergency powers.
- Challenged utility attacks on solar power in California and pushed the Newsom administration to massively deploy rooftop- and community-solar programs rather than centralized energy.
- Played a leadership role in killing Manchin's dirty deal; stood strong as one of the only national environmental groups to oppose the Inflation Reduction Act's fossil fuel giveaways; and protested forcefully at the climate convention in Egypt while securing the Biden administration's first announcement to support the phasedown of fossil fuels.

URBAN WILDLANDS

- Halted destructive developments throughout California that would threaten wildlife, worsen the climate crisis, and increase the risk of wildfire, including Guenoc Valley in Napa County and Fanita Ranch in San Diego County.
- Sponsored and helped pass the Safe Roads and Wildlife Protection Act, which requires California to improve wildlife connectivity so that vulnerable mountain lions, desert tortoises and California tiger salamanders can continue to roam in an increasingly fragmented landscape.
- Stopped unsustainable and shortsighted water projects like the Del Porto dam and Cadiz water pipeline that would prop up Big Ag at the cost of healthy ecosystems and communities.

OCEANS

- Continued our longstanding fight for endangered North Atlantic right whales, winning multiple court victories to save them from deadly entanglement in lobster gear and injury and death from ship strikes.
- Won a preliminary victory seeking expanded critical habitat for North Pacific right whales. With only 30 individuals remaining, these whales are the world's most imperiled whale population.
- Launched a lawsuit against the federal government for failing to protect 20 coral species in the Caribbean and Indo-Pacific.

POPULATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

- As the world population hit 8 billion, released a powerful report and media push connecting unsustainable human population growth with the wildlife extinction crisis.
- Launched an educational webinar series and website debunking myths about the impact of cattle grazing on wildlife and the environment.
- Issued a report on the connections between reproductive health, environmental toxicity and capitalism that's being used to educate healthcare professionals.

INTERNATIONAL

- Won litigation securing Endangered Species Act listing deadlines for giraffes and seven foreign bird and butterfly species put at risk by U.S. trade.
- Published an undercover investigation on Mexico's heartbreaking pet trade, showing how imperiled sloths, monkeys, parrots and many other species are openly marketed on social media.
- Documented foreign nations' extensive bycatch of dolphins and whales in fishing gear ahead of next year's requirement that the United States ban foreign seafood that fails to meet strong U.S. marine mammal protection standards.

CARNIVORE CONSERVATION

- Secured a landmark ruling that restored federal protection to gray wolves outside the northern Rockies and sued to win back Endangered Species Act protection for wolves that remain in the crosshairs in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho.
- Advanced important victories for bears by convincing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to consider bringing grizzly bears back to the North Cascades and saving Washington's black bears from inhumane spring hunts.
- Filed a groundbreaking petition to reintroduce jaguars to New Mexico and protect 14 million acres as critical habitat in Arizona and New Mexico.



Gray wolf

OUR 2023 PRIORITIES

There's one thing 2022 has made abundantly clear: If we're going to tackle the wildlife extinction emergency and the climate crisis — and indeed, save life on Earth — half-measures and business as usual won't cut it. This moment calls for bold, courageous ideas and the wherewithal to put them into action.

Here are our top five priorities for the coming year:

- 1. DECLARE NATIONAL EMERGENCIES OVER THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE LOSS OF WILDLIFE.** These aren't merely symbolic gestures. These steps by President Biden would unlock expansive executive-branch powers to bring the whole federal government into the fight. Time's running short — we lose one species every hour as the biodiversity crisis tears the wild world apart. Meanwhile evidence of the climate emergency is all around us, from massive storms and heat waves to the melting Arctic and frontline communities facing increasingly dire effects.
- 2. DOUBLE THE AMOUNT OF PROTECTED LAND AND WATER.** Simply put, we can't save animals and plants without protecting their habitat. That means safeguarding 30% of land and oceans by 2030 and half by 2050 — forests, rivers, wetlands, grasslands, deserts and marine habitats. A good place to start? Doubling the acreage of our national wildlife refuge system. The refuges were established to protect wildlife; it makes sense to expand on that idea by focusing on the places where biodiversity is most at risk.
- 3. DEFEND AND FULLY FUND THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.** With a 99% record of success, this law has done more than any other to save animals and plants from extinction. The year 2023 will mark the 50th anniversary of the Act. We'll be celebrating its successes with jubilation, but the best thing we can do is to protect this landmark law from right-wing attacks and ensure that Congress provides full funding for species on the brink. That includes well-known species like bears and wolves but also smaller ones like desert fishes, Hawaiian birds, butterflies and rare plants.



- 4. PROTECT ENDANGERED SPECIES FROM DANGEROUS PESTICIDES.** For decades the Environmental Protection Agency's pesticides office has ignored its legal duty to protect endangered species from the 1 billion pounds of pesticides it approves for use each year in the United States. The agency seems to be starting to change its tune, but we'll be holding it accountable to make sure it follows through on its promises and protects endangered species from chemical poisons.

- 5. ACT BOLDLY TO PROTECT WILDLIFE.** It isn't enough to defend against pollution, logging, habitat bulldozing and other threats to species. Saving biodiversity requires vision and the courage to make, and to realize, ambitious plans. Whether that means returning grizzly bears to California or reintroducing jaguars to some of their former habitat — or even creating a vast network of protected lands to facilitate large-scale wildlife migrations — we must pursue grand solutions that will ensure a real future for the wild. Nothing less will do.

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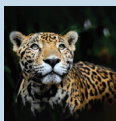
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Lydia Millet, Anna Mirocha

is the membership newsletter of the Center for Biological Diversity. With the support of more than 1.7 million members and supporters, the Center works through science, law and creative media to secure a future for all species, great or small, hovering on the brink of extinction. **Endangered Earth** is published three times yearly in January, July and October.

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