

Endangered earth

SUMMER 2013



Center for Biological Diversity



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ON THE WEB



Endangered Species Ringtones:

Hear the call of the wild? Or want to, whenever your cell phone rings?

At the Center's

RareEarhtones.org, you can download free ringtones of the songs, roars, chirps and howls of more than 100 imperiled animals — and wallpaper, too. (Check out LlamadasSalvajes.org for ringtones with descriptions in Spanish.)



Find Species Where You Are:

Ever wonder which endangered animals or plants may be hiding near you? Visit

BiologicalDiversity.org/SpeciesFinder to download our free "Species Finder" app for the Android phone, and find out in the blink of an eye.

Cover photo courtesy
Flickr commons/Out of Chicago

Taking to the Streets Against Keystone XL Pipeline

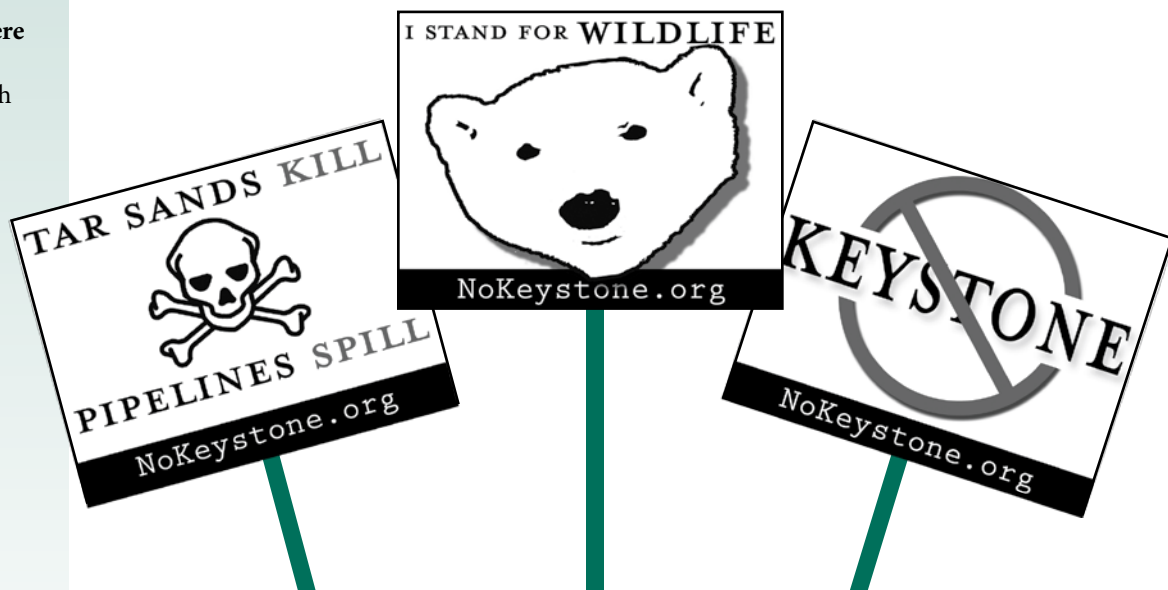
The Center for Biological Diversity dramatically ramped up our organizing efforts in the first half of 2013 to save the planet from the impacts of the destructive Keystone XL pipeline. The pipeline would cross 1,700 miles, risking the health of thousands of communities, lakes and rivers and threatening more than 20 endangered species; it would undoubtedly keep us moving down exactly the wrong path, perpetuating our climate-killing addiction to fossil fuels. And yet the Obama administration is clearly struggling with what should be an easy decision to reject a project that deepens our addiction to fossil fuels with little to no benefit for the American people.

The Keystone controversy, and our campaign, have been a public-opinion and political rollercoaster ride. The pendulum swung in Big Oil's direction in March, when the State Department issued an environmental impact statement on the project, asserting, in a curious contradiction, that Keystone was unlikely to harm the environment—even though the department also predicted the pipeline would spill more than 100 times during its lifetime.

Most inexplicable was the department's claim that burning the dirtiest oil on the planet wouldn't affect the climate.

The pendulum swung back, however, in April when 400,000 gallons of toxic tar-sands oil spilled in a neighborhood in Arkansas. Then the Environmental Protection Agency found the State Department's review of Keystone insufficient, directly challenging its sister agency's happy talk about climate and environmental impacts.

But the biggest momentum shifts happened because of people who care — like the thousands who showed up in remote Grand Isle, Neb., at the one-and-only State Department public hearing on Keystone, joining the Center's Frostpaw the Polar Bear and our cofounder Peter Galvin in what turned out to be an incredible





Check out our Keystone campaign website NoKeystone.org to get ideas for actions, download activist signs and find local rallies near you.

demonstration of opposition. More than 1 million anti-Keystone comments were submitted to the State Department by people all across the country.

The Center's supporters engaged in inspiring numbers and ways. We welcomed President Barack Obama to Miami with more than 150 activists protesting Keystone in the shadow of Miami's famed Freedom Tower. And by May, we'd generated 30,000-plus signers to our Keystone pledge, which includes a commitment to peaceful civil disobedience to protest the pipeline, and we had 950 people signed up to initiate their own Keystone protest actions by May.

Large-scale actions are being planned for summer. So if you haven't yet signed the pledge, *please* — do it.

Our Keystone campaign has its own website: NoKeystone.org. You can check the site for ideas for actions and events, as well as download our new Keystone activist signs, which you can use at rallies, place in your car windows, or turn into yard signs; use their digital versions as your Facebook profile picture.

We're urging our members and supporters to do

these things for a very important reason: Facebook has banned anti-Keystone advertisements, and it has been reported that founder Mark Zuckerberg is funding pro-Keystone groups. Help us call attention to this.

The Keystone threat requires that all of us scale up our participation and opposition. Stay tuned as the Center engages in creative and compelling ways to stop a project that must be stopped. Time is of the

essence: We believe the Keystone decision looms in late summer or early fall. We need to make a difference now, charting a better course for our country, our kids and our grandkids.



Jerry Karnas is the Center's field director and population director located in Tucson, Ariz.

Don't Want to Miss a Beat?

Stay up to date each week with the Center's news online.

Our work on the Keystone XL pipeline and dozens of other campaigns unfolds at a fast and furious pace throughout the year. Fortunately, there's a way you can get the most up-to-date news on our most recent wins for wildlife and opportunities to take action, delivered straight to your inbox: Join the ranks of more than a half-million readers who subscribe to *Endangered Earth Online*, the Center's weekly e-newsletter, at BiologicalDiversity.org/EEO.

A Dangerous Moment for America's Wolves

The future of America's wolves is at a critical turning point: In June the Obama administration announced it's stripping Endangered Species Act protections from nearly all wolves in the lower 48 states. That means gutting 40 years of wolf conservation and recovery.

And when wolves lose federal protections, they get killed. It means more hunting, more trapping, and more of the same ruthless persecution that nearly drove them extinct less than a century ago. It also means that wolves — absent today from 95 percent of their historic habitat in the continental United States — are virtually guaranteed never to fully recover in places like the Northeast, California, the southern Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Northwest.

The Center for Biological Diversity is going all out to stop the Obama administration's plans to abandon wolves. To the thousands of you who have already spoken out and joined us in this fight — thank you. We've got a long, tough battle ahead of us, and it's one we can't afford to lose.

Wolves are one of the most important wildlife recovery stories in our nation's history. It's simply too early to declare victory and walk away.

There were once about 2 million wolves in North America. Most were wiped out in the late 1800s and early 1900s as European settlements moved west and government-sponsored extermination programs were used to protect cows and sheep placed on landscapes occupied by wolves for tens of thousands of years.

With the passing of the Endangered Species Act under President Richard Nixon, and a more enlightened view of the vital ecosystem role played by predators, we shored up and encouraged wolf populations in the Great Lakes region, launched a successful reintroduction in the northern Rockies and, far less successfully, brought Mexican gray wolves back to parts of Arizona and New Mexico.

Now the Obama administration says that's good enough for wolf recovery. The government wants to remove federal protections for all wolves in the lower 48 states except those in the Southwest (which undeniably and desperately need protection, since there are just 75 or so — and a scant three breeding pairs — in the wild).



PHOTO COURTESY FLICKR COMMONS / LWPKOMMUNIKACIO

We've seen the terrible things that happen to wolves when they lose federal protection.

After wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains and western Great Lakes lost protections in 2011, states in these regions enacted aggressive hunting and trapping seasons designed to drastically reduce wolf populations. In the northern Rocky Mountains alone, more than 1,100 wolves have been killed since safeguards were removed, and this year populations declined by 7 percent.

Wolves today occupy just 5 percent of their historic habitat in the continental United States. But there are still vast tracts of land that scientists have determined can provide the space and prey to support healthy wolf populations.

All that's required of us is a little tolerance and a little imagination — and the willingness to follow through on our decades-long commitment to these incredible animals.



Noah Greenwald is the Center's Endangered Species program director in Portland, Ore.

Turtles Get Trade, Habitat Protections

739 Miles of U.S. Coastline Protected for Loggerheads

Reptiles across the globe and the United States are facing an extinction crisis, with one in five species at risk of dying out. Among the reptiles, the threat to freshwater turtles is particularly severe, with 50 percent of these animals threatened with extinction.

The status of marine turtles is also rapidly deteriorating; scientists predict that leatherback sea turtles, for example, may go extinct in 20 years. The dire status of freshwater and marine turtles demands aggressive action to curb threats like habitat loss and climate change.

Fortunately, freshwater turtles got some good news this year when countries unanimously voted to adopt a U.S. proposal to regulate and monitor international trade for Blanding's turtles, spotted turtles and diamondback terrapins. The decision, designed to curb overexploitation of freshwater turtles for Asian food and medicinal markets, was made at an international meeting under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in March. The turtles' protections came in response to a 2011 petition from the Center, which documented the harmful turtle trade and led to the U.S. proposal.

We're also pushing for Endangered Species Act protection for the country's rarest turtles, and this spring we scored a victory for Barbour's map turtles. Barbour's map turtles live only in wide, clear streams in the Apalachicola River system of Georgia, Alabama and Florida. They prey mainly on mollusks and insects such as caddisfly larvae and can only survive in waters clean enough to support that prey base. In April the Center reached a settlement agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requiring the agency to consider Endangered Species Act protection for the Barbour's map turtle and nine other species over the next five years.

Marine turtles have likewise gotten good news this year. Endangered loggerhead sea turtles won a federal commitment to protect critical nesting-beach

and ocean habitat in a legal settlement secured by the Center and our allies. Under the settlement, the government will propose protection of the turtles' feeding, breeding and migratory habitat in ocean waters in the U.S. Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the Gulf of Mexico — and will finalize that critical habitat protection by July 2014.

Earlier this year the government proposed to protect *more than 739 miles* of U.S. coastline as critical habitat for loggerheads.

On top of habitat protections, we're fighting to reduce sea turtle deaths through fisheries bycatch. Fishing is the single greatest threat to sea turtle survival because turtles get tangled up in fishing gear and drown. Along with our partners at Turtle Island Restoration Network, we formally requested U.S. trade sanctions against Mexico in April to stop the country's massive loggerhead sea turtle bycatch problem. Each year Mexican shark and halibut fisheries off Baja California kill more than 2,000 endangered loggerheads.

The survival of freshwater and marine turtles hinges on reforming the human activities that are hurting them. And yes, sometimes progress to secure needed protections seems too slow, considering all the threats these creatures face. But like the tortoise in his mythological race with the hare, we'll keep going, solid and steady, and in the end we intend to win this race against extinction and stop these ancient, dinosaur-era animals from disappearing on our watch.

Collette Adkins Giese is the Center's full-time staff attorney protecting rare amphibians and reptiles. She is located in Minnesota.



DIAMONDBACK TERRAPIN BY
JENNY MASTANUONO / USDA



War Games With Deadly Consequences

Federal Government May Allow Navy Training Exercises to Harm, Kill Whales and Dolphins

Here's some startling news: The federal government is offering to let the U.S. Navy harm, harass and even kill whales, seals, dolphins and other marine mammals *more than 30 million times* during five years of training exercises.

That's more than 16,000 instances every day on average, or 684 times an hour. Eleven times a minute.

And it's happening in U.S. waters. Specifically, the proposal would let the Navy hurt marine mammals as many as 9.5 million times near Hawaii and California and 21.8 million times off the Atlantic Coast during these military war games. These "games" include sonar blasts — incredibly loud underwater explosions that have been implicated in whale strandings and brain bleeds.

As they're planned, the exercises will undoubtedly result in thousands of cases of permanent hearing loss, lung injury and death.

It's not that these episodes are new under the sun. The government has previously approved similar kinds of permits before for the Navy. But never, as far as I know, has it done so on such a massive scale.

In 2000, 14 beaked whales and several other marine mammals stranded themselves in the Bahamas in response to Navy vessels operating offshore mid-frequency sonar. Necropsies revealed bleeding around the animals' ears and brains. (The entire Cuvier's beaked whale population disappeared from the area after

the incident.) In 2003, 14 harbor porpoises were stranded during Navy sonar training in Puget Sound. In 2004 hundreds of melon-headed whales were driven into Hanalei Bay, Hawaii, by Navy drills.

And the timing couldn't be worse for many of the marine mammals that'll be affected by this latest proposal. With only about 350 North Atlantic right whales remaining in existence, these creatures are one of the world's most endangered whales. Yet war-game players will be allowed to hurt them nearly 1,000 times during the five years of Atlantic war games.

Once numbering more than 200,000, blue whales have been reduced to likely fewer than 10,000 individuals across the globe, and California's population numbers only about 2,000 animals. New research reveals that blue whales are sensitive to sonar and cease their calls, which may be important for foraging and other life-sustaining functions. Hawaiian monk seals, now critically endangered, have only about 1,000 left in the wild. Accordingly, adding the stress of sonar into the habitat of these animals that depend on sound for finding food, communicating and navigating could be highly destructive.

Environmental groups have been trying for years to protect marine mammals from these sonar blasts. Pending now is a lawsuit, brought by the Center for Biological Diversity and other allies, that challenges the government's failure to protect thousands of whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals and sea lions from Navy sonar in the Pacific Northwest. In 2008 we won a challenge to Navy training exercises using mid-frequency sonar off the coast of Hawaii. The federal judge ordered the Navy to avoid near-shore areas where marine mammals like beaked whales are more likely to be harmed by the sonar.

The new proposal could make the Navy's war games more devastating than ever. And it's not right. Rather than letting the feds force wildlife to suffer vast amounts of harm and harassment, we hope that you'll call on our government to close off

our oceans' most critical, biologically sensitive wildlife areas to military training. The great whales and other mammals of the sea deserve to be spared our ear-shattering noise.

Miyoko Sakashita directs the Center's Oceans program from San Francisco.



MONK SEAL COURTESY OF USFWS



California Fracking Battle Heats Up

Center's "Fractivism" Produces Landmark Victory

A landmark legal victory, three courageous lawmakers and a broad coalition have challenged oil-industry plans for accelerated fracking of the Golden State for shale oil. Now the Center is gearing up for a protracted fight against the dangerous and destructive practice, which involves blasting huge volumes of water mixed with toxic chemicals into the ground to shatter rock formations and release oil and gas. Tied to air and water pollution, fracking also releases large amounts of methane, an extremely potent greenhouse gas.

Hundreds, possibly thousands of wells have already been fracked in at least nine California counties without the enforcement of any fracking regulations or even monitoring by state oil and gas officials. But in March a federal judge ruled that the Obama administration violated the law when it issued oil leases in Monterey County, Calif., without considering the environmental risks of fracking.

The ruling came in response to a lawsuit brought by the Center and our allies challenging a decision by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to auction off about 2,500 acres of land in Monterey County to oil companies. The leases sit atop the Monterey Shale, a massive shale formation stretching down to Los Angeles that contains a vast amount of frackable oil.

In the wake of our historic legal victory, the Center and partners filed a new lawsuit in April challenging another recent BLM auction of an additional 17,000 acres in central California for drilling and fracking. Two weeks later the federal government announced the postponement of all oil and gas lease sales in California for the rest of the fiscal year.

A broad coalition of nurses, farmers, environmental and public-health advocates, and state lawmakers are also pushing back against fracking. Three bills in the California legislature that would halt fracking in the state won approval in April from the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, despite feverish opposition from the oil industry.

Richard Bloom's A.B. 1301—which is sponsored by the Center—Holly Mitchell's A.B. 1323 and Adrin Nazarian's A.B. 649 would all impose a moratorium on fracking in California while threats posed by the controversial practice are studied. All three bills were voted down, but we continue to fight to get California to address fracking.



PHOTO BY CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

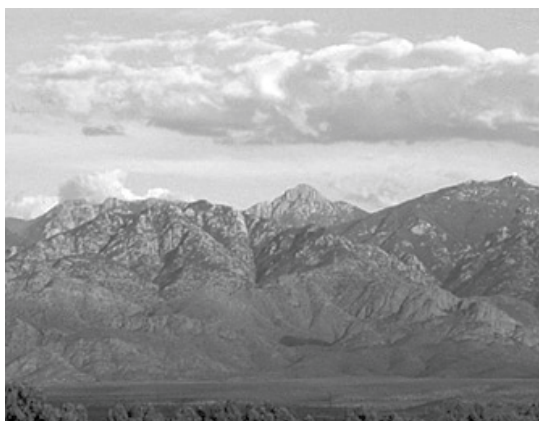
Gov. Jerry Brown could also lead the way to stopping fracking or block efforts to protect California from fracking, so the Center is working to educate the governor about the risks a fracking boom poses to our state. We've teamed up with allies to create Californians Against Fracking, a statewide coalition to ban fracking in California that launched in May with a major protest attended by hundreds and led by anti-fracking filmmaker Josh Fox (*Gasland II*) outside the governor's office in Los Angeles.

Kassie Siegel is senior counsel and director of the Center's Climate Law Institute in San Francisco.



The Rosemont Copper Controversy

The Jaguar, the Orchid and the Open-pit Mine



Santa Rita Mountains



Coleman's Coralroot



American Jaguar

In the Santa Rita Mountains just outside Tucson, Ariz., the Center for Biological Diversity is battling a major open-pit copper mine plan that threatens an array of rare and vanishing species. The conflict has been escalating for several years — just 25 miles from Center headquarters — in a critical wildlife corridor in the heart of Arizona's "Sky Island" region, world-renowned for its biodiversity.

The mine would bury several thousand acres of public land in the Coronado National Forest under billions of tons of toxic waste, pollute the air and water of a metropolitan area of nearly a million people, and have a devastating impact on some of the region's native animals and plants.

At least seven threatened and endangered species would be hurt, along with several other sensitive species that have not yet received federal protection. The mine would pump vast amounts of groundwater and threatens to dewater the nearby riparian areas, which are home to the endangered Gila chub, Gila topminnow and Huachuca water umbel, and provide critical habitat for the Chiricahua leopard frog and southwestern willow flycatcher.

The immediate site of the mine is home to several rare plant species, including Coleman's coralroot, a beautiful desert orchid that's entirely dependent for its sustenance on a delicate biological relationship with a fungus that grows on the roots of host trees in areas of shallow groundwater. The mine would likely destroy that relationship and bury many of the plants, only a few hundred of which remain. The Center has petitioned and litigated to protect the orchid, with a decision due by the end of 2013.

With excellent connectivity to Mexico and nearby mountain ranges, the Santa Ritas are vital to endangered jaguar and ocelot recovery. In August 2012 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service included the Rosemont area in its jaguar critical habitat proposal and took

the unusual step of specifically calling out the proposed Rosemont mine as a direct threat to jaguar recovery in the United States.

Under heavy pressure from the mining company to remove the Rosemont area from its jaguar critical habitat proposal, the Service was vindicated within a few months when numerous photographs collected by remote trail cameras revealed a resident jaguar in the Rosemont area. In fact, the locations indicated that the big cat had used the same movement corridor the Center and other mine opponents had previously identified as critical for recovery.

The Center has joined with coalition allies in litigating against a flawed approval process conducted by the U.S. Forest Service and appealing the rubber-stamp approval of air- and water-quality permits by the state of Arizona, among other actions. It's a testament to the tremendous destructive force of modern open-pit mining that so many species and such a wide range of impacts are in play.

With the approval process stalled and the mining company running out of money, momentum is on our side. The Center will keep fighting, along with local, regional and national allies, to stop the Rosemont mine from destroying this precious piece of the Sky Islands and hurting the jaguars, coralroot and other plants and animals that call it home.

Randy Serraglio is one of the Center's Southwest conservation advocates in Tucson.



West Coast Wolves on the Frontlines

Yellowstone National Park, winter 1998.

It's 6:30 a.m. and 11 degrees. We've been clustered around our spotting scopes for 45 minutes. Some of us open thermoses of steaming coffee or deeply inhale the frigid air; others stay glued to their scopes.

Suddenly someone whispers: "There. It's a wolf. Two! By that cluster of pines. See?"

We all see. Then three more wolves trot into view to join their packmates; they pause, sniff the ground. The images of these animals in a frozen landscape are burned into my memory.

As a child I told my family I planned to have puppies instead of children — so it's no surprise I ended up fighting for the right of wolves to live free and bear pups of their own.

I grew up in a midwestern university town, where we didn't have wolves, mountain lions or bears — they'd been hunted and trapped to extinction in the region long before I was born. But to the north, Minnesota still had a tiny remnant population.

Years later, when that state was developing a wolf conservation plan, I politely challenged the director of natural resources about a harmful regulation. He turned red, sputtered angrily and accused me of being disrespectful. But later the language in that regulation was greatly improved — my first lesson in what it would take.

I've been using my background as a biologist and a lawyer to protect wolves for 17 years. Wolf conservation depends on rock-solid science and environmental laws, as well as collaborative efforts among conservationists, agencies, ranchers and hunting groups.

In Washington, Oregon and California, wolves' tenuous return to the West Coast has been greeted with a mixture of jubilation and animosity. Oregon and Washington have state wolf plans developed through a stakeholder process, and California's planning is now underway. That means, for me, striking a powerful balance between cooperation with diverse interests and holding the line firmly to ensure wolves survival.

When wolves first enter a state where they haven't been for decades, a handful of state legislators typically go berserk, introducing a frenzy of anti-wolf bills.

It's my job to analyze those bills, strategize with colleagues, rally supporters to action, and testify at hearings. This year both Oregon and Washington introduced several such bills. We managed to defeat the destructive measures in Washington; in Oregon we're working hard and making some headway.

Last year, after Oregon wolf OR-7 became the first in California in almost 90 years, the Center and three allies filed a petition to protect wolves under California's Endangered Species Act. We're making a very strong case for getting the wolf listed, and we're optimistic.

Meanwhile the Interior Department is proposing to slash federal protections for wolves across most of the country. Our staff is working feverishly to stop these vital protections from being taken away.

Dedication to wolves, as it turns out, isn't all about puppies. Over the years I've discovered there's a whole pack of us devoted to fighting for the survival of this majestic species.

Amaroq Weiss is the Center's West Coast wolf organizer in California.





PHOTO COURTESY FLICKR COMMONS / MACJEWELL

Human population growth, urban sprawl and unsustainable consumption habits have pushed Florida panthers to near extinction.

Poll: Americans concerned about population growth

To plumb the mystery of why it's so hard for our country to have a conversation about human population growth, the Center has embarked on a spate of intensive research.

In January we commissioned a national poll on population issues; the results made it clear that Americans recognize that population growth — along with related issues of consumption and sprawl — are crowding out species like Florida panthers and sea turtles, destroying habitat and driving climate change, which is pushing polar bears and ice seals toward extinction.

Sixty-four percent of poll respondents said that the growth of the human population to 10

billion by 2050 will hurt wildlife.

Sixty-one percent said they're already concerned about the rate of wildlife loss, and 57 percent said they believe human population growth is "significantly impacting the disappearance of wildlife" and making climate change worse.

Keeping up our push to provoke conversations about population, we handed out 50,000 of our free and popular Endangered Species Condoms for the New Year, along with another 15,000 at Earth Day events around the country.

Along with two condoms, each package offers original artwork and information on the species featured, facts about unsustainable human population growth and the extinction crisis, and suggestions on how population growth can be stabilized.

Campaign to protect endangered species from rodenticides

Wild animals are often killed as a side effect of the poisons used to control household and agricultural pests — especially by what are known as "second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides."

Studies have documented these chemicals in more than 70 percent of wildlife tested — animals like eagles, hawks, falcons, owls, bobcats, mountain lions, endangered Pacific fishers and San Joaquin kit foxes.

The kit foxes have been hit hard: 76 separate incidents of fox poisonings by super-toxic rodenticides have been reported by the state of California.

In the Bakersfield area alone, more than 87 percent of kit foxes have been exposed. Even in remote areas, research has revealed unacceptably high levels of poison in wildlife — for instance, in endangered Pacific fishers, 75 percent tested positive for toxic rodenticides in a study.

In February the Center launched a lawsuit against the California Department of Pesticide Regulation to force it to protect kit foxes and fishers, as well as golden eagles and other wildlife, from these poisons.

Our legal notice cites studies documenting the poisonings and deaths of at least 25 California species. Following an industry challenge to an Environmental Protection Agency plan to limit the sale of rat poison without tamper-proof packaging (to prevent unintentional poisonings of children, pets and wildlife), we joined a motion to intervene.

Devastating bat disease continues to spread

White-nose syndrome, a devastating fungal disease, has killed nearly 7 million North American bats already and continues to spread south and west. White-nose was discovered at Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky in January, in Illinois in February, and in northern Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina in April.

The disease hits hibernating, generally insect-eating bats and has now reached 22 U.S. states and five Canadian provinces. A new U.S. Geological Survey study predicts that more than 90 percent of all Indiana bats (from New England to the Ozarks) will be exposed to the fungal disease within two decades.

In March, when the U.S. Forest Service released a plan to reopen Rocky Mountain caves, we

stepped in with allies and filed an appeal. And in May, following a Center petition, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife announced that Townsend's big-eared bats may warrant state protection.

The Center is pushing for aggressive action against the devastating fungus, including closing caves to recreation so humans don't spread the disease further.

Biologists believe the fungal pathogen that causes white-nose syndrome was most likely introduced to the country by a human cave visitor from Europe. Although bats are the primary vector for the disease, people are believed to likely transport the fungus on their shoes, clothing and other gear.

We need to act fast to buy scientists time to assess both the dangers and possible solutions to white-nose — before this catastrophe eliminates not only our precious bat populations but also the vital services they offer to U.S. farmers and our economy.

With Epic Battles to Save Wolves and Climate, Your Support Makes a World of Difference

This year, the 40th-anniversary year of the Endangered Species Act, the Center for Biological Diversity is fighting some epic battles. We're mounting an ambitious, no-holds-barred campaign to save wolves from the disastrous effects of nationwide delisting and restore them throughout their historic range.

We're fighting Keystone XL and the climate catastrophe it will perpetuate and mobilizing cities all over the country to call on our national leaders to use the Clean Air Act to reduce greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. We're staving off Big Oil, which wants to drill in the American Arctic.

Fortunately we have you on our side. Our network of members and online activists is a force to be reckoned with — a force that's helped halt uranium mining in the Grand Canyon, fought for endangered species protections for polar bears, secured 9.6 million acres of protected critical habitat for northern spotted owls and much more.

The Center is making a difference on a global scale. We do it because our dedicated supporters have our back, while we hold government and unscrupulous profiteers accountable, using the powerful Endangered Species Act and other laws, as well as sound science and a creative media strategy, to fight for the right of all creatures to live and thrive in this world.

Together the Center and our members and supporters will aggressively defend the Endangered Species Act and the future of this planet's biological life-support systems. Help us celebrate 40 years of success under the Act. Stay with us in the fight by mailing a gift to the Center in the enclosed envelope; giving online at Donate.BiologicalDiversity.org; or calling us toll-free at (866) 357-3349; or sign up to become a Monthly Sustaining Member at Sustain.BiologicalDiversity.org •

YOUR GENEROUS GIFT Saves Wildlife

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A Powerful Voice for Wolves

From the Director

Kierán Suckling

Saving wolves has been central to the Center's work for decades. As top predators they're vital

to maintaining healthy forests and wild landscapes — that's the scientific basis for our fight. But there's also the beauty and the haunting mystery of wolves, whose howls, once silenced, leave behind a country far less wild and a bit less sacred than in the days when these animals roamed free.

Thus I was devastated when, in June, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced it was prematurely shutting down its 40-year-old wolf recovery program. It plans to strip Endangered Species Act protection from nearly all wolves across the lower 48 states (Mexican wolves are the lone exception). We knew it was coming, but that doesn't make it a less bitter pill to swallow.

If this plan goes through, wolves will be shot, trapped, gassed in their dens and otherwise brutally killed at a level we haven't seen since they were almost exterminated a century ago.

They will never return to California, the southern Rocky Mountains or the Northeast. And the Pacific Northwest's

fledgling population will come under quick and deadly assault.

The good news is that I'm not alone in my love of wolves. Far from it. It's inspiring to hear from our members every day about their passion for wolves. Thousands of you have already spoken out, written letters, donated money and united in defense of these animals. The message to President Obama is clear: Wolves are our fellow Americans. Wolves belong here. We cannot abandon them.

Thank you to all who have joined this historic effort to save wolf recovery. Funded by our emergency *Wolf Defense Fund*, the Center has assembled a powerful team of lawyers, scientists and activists, led by Noah Greenwald and Amy Atwood in our Portland office, to challenge the Fish and Wildlife Service's decision in court.

They're a crack team, and I know they'll win — just as they have so many times when push came to shove on wolf killing.

The alternative is too grim to contemplate: State wildlife agencies will quickly expand wolf killing if federal protections are lost. Almost 2,000 wolves have already been killed since April 2011, when Congress gutted protections in five states. We can't let that zone of death expand throughout the country.

We'll need your help to win this critical battle. I'll keep you updated on the campaign.

Endangered earth

is the membership newsletter of the Center for Biological Diversity. With the support of more than 500,000 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 and printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper with solvent-free vegetable-based inks.

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COPYEDITING

Lydia Millet, Anna Mirocha

CONTRIBUTORS

Jerry Karnas, Noah Greenwald, Randy Serraglio, Kassie Siegel, Amaroq Weiss, Miyoko Sakashita, Collette Adkins Giese, Russ McSpadden, Mike Stark, Kierán Suckling

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