

PEOPLE AND CARNIVORES

TRACKS



"A Fierce Green Fire" Still Burns Alongside Wolf Challenges

Despite harsh policies in many states where wolves still live, the apex canine continues to expand further into historic range. Moving out from the Northern Rockies, wolves are recolonizing new areas of Washington, Oregon, California, and now Colorado. In Colorado, there may be a pack in the north, and Colorado residents are anticipating the reintroduction of wolves to the western Rocky Mountains by the end of 2023.



A wolf near one of our projects in SW Montana.

In the Great Lakes region, we have the largest US wolf population (other than Alaska), followed by the Northern Rockies. The Mexican wolf population continues to struggle with fewer than 200 gray wolves, but it is bigger than it was four years ago. In North Carolina we have the smallest wolf population, red wolves, at roughly 20 wild animals. This is not a viable population, and we hope the US Fish & Wildlife Service will reintroduce red wolves in the Southeast again (the legal battle continues).

In the Northern Rockies, wolves struggle with state agencies increasing already-excessive hunting quotas, even though studies show that human-caused wolf mortality such as hunting affects the persistence, behaviors, and reproduction of wolves. Small bits of hope exist as one Idaho county commissioner is pushing for a ban on wolf trapping. Last November, California's Whaleback Pack produced its largest litter, with eight pups. We're skeptical, but Montana is developing a new wolf plan. People

and Carnivores works in this dynamic socio-ecological intersection. Given ample fear and negative narratives, the work is not easy, but it's rewarding to see how effective prevention tools are when people use them.

Recently retired Yellowstone Park wolf biologist Doug Smith said in an interview with Yellowstone Public Radio that the key to living with wolves is finding middle ground, talking with people, and being open. Smith led the Yellowstone Wolf Program for 28 years including during wolf reintroduction. He and others have tried to persuade lawmakers to create a buffer zone around Yellowstone for wolves to wander without being hunted. We will miss his commitment to wolves in the NPS role.

"To live with them, you've gotta reach compromise."

—Doug Smith, Yellowstone Wolf Program Leader (Ret.)

Thanks to our passionate and generous supporters, we have set aside a special fund specifically for wolf conflict prevention, education, and advocacy work in 2023.



A wolf in Yellowstone Park. Thanks to Doug Smith for his great work over the years.

"A Fierce Green Fire" comes from Aldo Leopold's chapter "Thinking Like a Mountain" in A Sand County Almanac to describe the eyes of a wolf.



PEOPLE AND CARNIVORES

Staff

Chris Anderson
Special Projects Coordinator

Bryce Andrews
Advisor

Rosie Costain
Program Coordinator

Kim Johnston
High Divide Field Specialist

Ryan Wilbur
NW MT Field Specialist

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Mikayla Zukowski
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Kim Johnston
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P.O. Box 6733
Bozeman, MT 59771-9922
(406) 587-3389

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From the Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It's that time of year again when we start to think about bears emerging from their dens, and wolves and cats having their young. Winters here have become shorter and variable – not good for carnivores. But there is hope in cubs and pups, and if we help each animal survive and move about, we help the populations fight back against harmful policies and increasing development.

This year, the Montana legislature is in session, so we have been tracking proposed policies, testifying in support of increased carnivore coexistence resources and against increased hunting and lethal control. We also just submitted our comments on the proposed Montana grizzly bear management plan, which is very harsh and control-oriented. The USFWS is conducting a review to see if they will propose delisting again for Yellowstone grizzlies, and also potentially for Glacier area grizzlies. Given state proposals, we will oppose delisting.

In this issue of Tracks, we share a few project highlights as well as our annual report for fiscal year 2022 (October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022). People and Carnivores continues to take small steps of growth and put more resources out there to protect wolves, bears, and lions. Thank you for making this possible.

Lisa Upson
LUpson@PeopleAndCarnivores.org

Cat Coexistence

From conflicts to coexistence, prevention tools are changing the way we live alongside large carnivores like America's Lion. Using electric fencing and enclosures to scare devices and livestock guardian dogs, we partner with landowners to keep mountain lions away from people, pets, and livestock, helping them move and building tolerance along the way.

Chickens are one carnivore attractant that has exploded across the Northern Rockies. An electric fence project set up around a chicken coop this past season to prevent a grizzly bear conflict also proved to keep mountain lions out of trouble. Livestock guardian dogs on a partner ranch continue to loyally protect their sheep, while mountain lions utilize this ranch as well, following native prey of deer and turkeys.

Mountain lions require large tracts of habitat, forcing them to navigate a matrix of public and private lands to find food and mates. Currently, there are no conflict prevention or educational materials in the state wildlife agency about living with lions. In 2023, in addition to field prevention projects, we are creating an education kit about mountain lions to shift the management and public mindset from lethal control to non-lethal conflict prevention.



A mountain lion stalks elk on a project property.

Getting Ahead While Bears Are in Bed

Last year brought news of grizzlies in new places prompting delivery of bear-resistant garbage cans, installation of electric fence around chicken coops, new guard dog projects, and plenty of conversations about potential bear conflicts. With bears tucked away in their winter dens, we're working to get ahead of conflicts this summer. Here is a sampling of projects that we think will be particularly meaningful for bears and people.

Bear Safety for Vacationers

Vacation rental and lodging businesses like Airbnb, Hipcamp, and VRBO have made recreation and vacation travel easy and interesting for visitors to the Northern Rockies. We are partnering with some of these vendors, private campgrounds and



A mother grizzly wanders with her cubs.

P&C's Bear Smart Community Resource Fund

In January, we launched the Bear Smart Community Resource Fund to help communities—from towns to neighborhood networks—become "Bear Smart" by creating and implementing plans for reducing bear conflicts across their communities. In 2023, we will provide consultation

West Yellowstone. In Bozeman, we're supporting the City's pilot program to distribute bear-resistant garbage cans and sharing information about securing bear attractants at neighborhood meetings.

Spreading the Word to Spanish Speakers

People all over the country love Flathead cherries, but so do bears in the Flathead Valley where many orchards produce the famous crop. When harvest season comes, workers employed as fruit pickers—many of whom primarily speak Spanish—often camp in the orchards and aren't familiar with living and working in bear country. We are creating Spanish language materials, trainings, and providing toolkits to orchard owners and for pickers to minimize bear attractants at the camps and to keep people safe.



P&C's vacation home toolkit includes an owner tip sheet, sticker and rebate for a garbage can, fridge magnet, and flyer to place in the rental.

RV parks, and providing toolkits to vacation home owners to minimize bear attractants at the rental and to help renters have a safe stay while in bear country. If you are a Hipcamper, vacationing doesn't always mean staying in a house (or, it could be a treehouse!). We are working with Hipcamp to develop information for hosts and campers on food and garbage storage and bear safety.

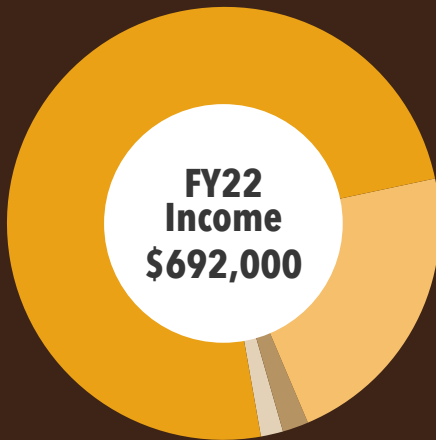
services, educational materials, and funding (up to \$50,000 in 2023) in Western Montana, Northern Idaho, and the Greater Yellowstone region. Outside of the fund, we're working on community projects in Bozeman and



A black bear and her cub are deterred by a fence P&C built for an orchard.

People and Carnivores Financial Summary: Fiscal Year 2022

October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022



\$517,000

Grants

\$151,000

Donations

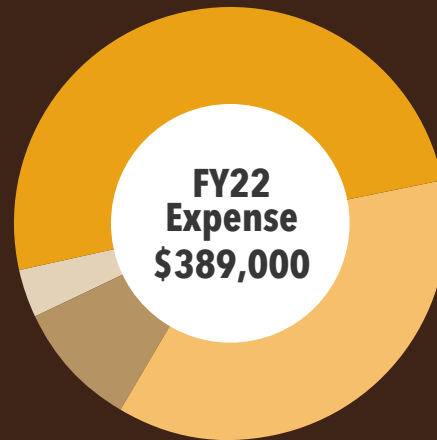
\$14,000

Investments

\$10,000

Contracts

**FY22
Income
\$692,000**



\$196,000

High Divide Program

\$143,000

Crown Program

\$37,000

Fundraising

\$13,000

Administrative

**FY22
Expense
\$389,000**

Net income for Fiscal Year 2022 was \$303,000. We were fortunate to receive a one-time unanticipated grant from the Cadeau Foundation of almost \$200,000, and several other generous funding awards from foundations and institutional funding partners (see below). Our individual, family, and business donations have been increasing gradually each year as well. In Fiscal Year 2022, for the first time, People and Carnivores exceeded one million dollars in net assets, and we ended the year with equity of \$1,059,000. Our surplus allowed us to add funds to our operating reserve, now at \$200,000, which provides roughly six months' operating funds if we experience a sudden downturn. People and Carnivores has had three consecutive years of funding surplus, fueling a gradual and steady growth, during which we have cautiously added staff capacity, largely in program. We may add a seasonal field specialist in 2023 to continue to put resources on the ground for wolves, bears, lions, and other wildlife.

Among the most impactful program highlights from last year, we are excited about our vacation rentals bear safety toolkit which we are distributing to vacation rental home owners in Southwest Montana and across the region. We conducted a survey of bear conflict prevention infrastructure for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, to help the agency address gaps as grizzlies expand. We continued a focus on Bear Smart Community work and just launched a BSC resource fund to help small communities build their own programs. We completed several field projects in Western Montana using various tools to deter lions, wolves, and bears. We have made it a priority to scale coexistence at every opportunity using partnerships, communications, and funding – while continuing our core work in the field building fences, educating landowners, placing guard dogs, setting up scare devices, and more. We sincerely thank you for protecting wildlife, and we commit to working efficiently and effectively.

Institutional and Foundation Funding Partners

A sincere thank you to all of the generous institutional funders that awarded grant or contract funding to P&C in FY2022—we are tremendously grateful for your partnership in protecting wild carnivores!



With Gratitude to Our Individual, Family, and Business Supporters in FY2022

Thank you for protecting wolves, bears, and lions with us!

\$5,000+

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People and Carnivores' Kim Johnston worked with a rancher in December 2022 to purchase and place four livestock guardian dog puppies at the southwest Montana ranch. This pup is an Anatolian/Turkish Boz Shepherd mix and only three months old!

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