



2021

ANNUAL REPORT

photo courtesy of Wildlife Tourism for Tomorrow and Taylor Glenn Photography

Project Driven | People Focused

While conserving wildlife is our mission, The WYldlife Fund cares about people just as much as we do wildlife. That's why it is just as much our pursuit to conserve people's love for wildlife; Making the WYldlife Fund a home for all people who love the wildlife of Wyoming.

Serving as a partner nonprofit to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission and Department, The WYldlife Fund is uniquely positioned to have profound positive impact.



A MESSAGE FROM



MARK WILSON | CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Thank you for supporting The WYldlife Fund [The Fund]. Our success would not be possible without you. The year 2021 has been one of the great strides forward for The Fund, and the wildlife of Wyoming. We were excited to announce in November that our first major project, the I-25 [Buffalo to Kaycee] Wildlife Crossing Project is now fully funded. This 18 mile stretch of interstate is the second deadliest in Wyoming for wildlife and has been a central focus of The Fund. We have set out since our conception in March 2020 to help make this priority project of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department a reality, and I am happy to report we have *accomplished* just this. Designs of the project are now complete, with construction expected to be underway in 2022.



We take stewardship of donations to the highest level of responsibility. As we grow The Fund, for the benefit of Wyoming's wildlife, adhering to the core principles of integrity, honesty and hard work will be at the forefront. - **Mark Wilson**



BRIAN NESVIK | EX-OFFICIO DIRECTOR DIRECTOR WYOMING GAME & FISH DEPARTMENT

The Fund is in lockstep with the priorities and mission of Game and Fish, helping to further Department projects such as wildlife crossings, Inspire a Kid and habitat improvement initiatives across the state. This work is a reflection of how the organization is making a memorable impact for Wyoming's future. 2021 has been a banner year for The Fund and speaks to greater success on the horizon.

There is hardly a project Game and Fish takes on that does not have a deep bench of partners that make it possible. I am proud and honored to serve on the Board of Directors of The WYldlife Fund as we work to advance wildlife and conservation projects well into the future.

- **Brian Nesvik**

I - 25 WILDLIFE CROSSING

This project uses a low cost strategy that will significantly reduce mule deer mortalities from wildlife-vehicle collisions and serves as a model to encourage similar projects throughout the west. Fifteen miles of exclusionary fence will be constructed on both sides of Interstate 25 between mileposts 255 and 270, funneling wildlife into six existing structures under the interstate. The allure of this project is not only its relatively low [overall] cost, but also the opportunity to utilize preexisting agricultural underpasses to provide safe passage for wildlife across I-25.

BUFFALO-TO



KAYCEE



PROJECT FUNDING SPOTLIGHT



We believe this project will improve connectivity across the interstate as well as reduce highway mortalities, potentially increasing overall population in the Upper Powder River and Pumpkin Buttes mule deer herds. Carcass counts and crash data will be used to compare conditions before and after project completion as means to measure success of the project. Deer escape ramps, cattle guards and gates will also be included in construction plans to facilitate appropriate movement of big game animals into the future. Construction will begin in 2022.

WITH SPECIAL THANKS

In 2020 and 2021, The WYldlife Fund has helped raise \$360,000 in private funds for the I-25 Wildlife Crossing. We thank the Knobloch Family Foundation as well as the Bass Pro & Cabelas Outdoor Fund for their major contributions of \$200,000 and \$125,000.

The Fund also helped generate an additional \$1,385,000 in matching funds, thanks to the generosity and vision of the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT). With special thanks to Executive Director Bob Budd and the WWNRT Board of Directors for their support.

Teaming up with Muley Fanatic Foundation, the first annual Golf for Wildlife outing was held in July at the Buffalo Golf club. This event raised both awareness and dollars, held in exclusive support of the I-25 project.



>>>> >>>> INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF

In 2021, The WYldlife Fund was proud to support *Camp Wild* at *Whiskey Mountain Conservation Camp*. These camp offerings accommodate families at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department summer camp near Dubois, Wyoming. Both the boys and girls camp focus on exploration of nature, introduction to conservation principles, practicing science and learning new recreational outdoor activities, while giving participants exposure to successful navigation and positive interaction with the outdoor environment. These camps, led by Wyoming Game and Fish Department staff, allow participants to observe the natural world, engage in wildlife, fish and habitat biology, while recreating responsibly in the outdoors.



WILDLIFE ENTHUSIASTS >>>>

We invest in programs that advance the mission of securing the future of the great outdoors through the youth of Wyoming.

In addition to supporting *Camp Wild*, The WYldlife Fund acquired a grant to support the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's *Inspire a Kid* program in the summer of 2021.

This grant will help fund the purchase of Pronghorn educational boxes, which will travel to classrooms across the state, as well as educational tracking collars to aid biologists in teaching students the importance of migration research.



We were also honored to send a grant to *Joey's Fly Fishing Foundation* in sponsorship of a *Cutt Slam* trip for youth. The *Cutt Slam* is an epic adventure through the Wyoming Game and Fish Department which challenges an individual to catch the state's four Cutthroat Trout species in their native drainages. This once in a lifetime opportunity will not soon be forgotten by the youth who participated. We thank Joey for his dedication to advancing wildlife and the youth of Wyoming!

>>>> EMPOWERING THE FUTURE OF CONSERVATION <<<<

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

The WYldlife Fund is laser focused on implementing solutions to the obstacles facing Wyoming's wildlife today, while keeping a steadfast eye on the future. As part of our overall mission to advance western conservation, we are proud to support, promote, and help manage the following flagship initiatives that launched in 2021. Both *Wildlife Tourism for Tomorrow* and the *Western Conservation Leadership Development Program* are not only dedicated to advancing wildlife initiatives, but also, empowering future leaders of wildlife conservation.



Wyoming's Wildlife range widely across the state, crossing the invisible boundaries of private and public lands and the diverse habitats they need to thrive. Visitors and locals alike love our diverse wildlife so...How do we create more partners to secure their future? It was this very question that inspired EcoTour Adventures owner and WYldlife Fund Board Member, Taylor Phillips, to found Wildlife Tourism For Tomorrow, with the help and support of WYldlife Fund President, Chris McBarnes. For many Wyomingites, wildlife are not only part of our way of life, they are also core to our livelihoods. We believe that there is an untapped funding opportunity for wildlife conservation in Wyoming via the businesses and individuals who depend upon them.

Wildlife Tourism For Tomorrow seeks to provide a long-term and robust funding mechanism for critical conservation projects across the state. Our wildlife transcend the borders of National Parks and Forests as well as other public and private lands...so does our giving.

The first contribution of \$20,000 from Wildlife Tourism For Tomorrow was presented to the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in November to support the Spread Creek Fish Passage Project in Teton County.



The WYldlife Fund is dedicated to raising up the next generation of conservationists who can help lead the complex landscape of wildlife management. In collaboration with the Inter-mountain West Joint Venture, in addition to federal and state stakeholders, the Western Conservation Leadership Development Program [WCLDP] was born.

The purpose of the WCLDP is to equip a diverse set of public and private partners in the western region with the leadership and relationship capacities required to inspire and create a legacy of conservation for future generations. Our first cohort of 31 students commenced virtually in the fall of 2021. Students ranged from several states including Hawaii, Alaska, Idaho and Arizona to name a few.

The WYldlife Fund has raised and placed hundreds of thousands of dollars back on the ground for the wildlife of Wyoming. We have found great success in leveraging matching dollars through our partnership with the *Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust*, effectively doubling the impact of funds raised. Steadfast in our mission to ensure donor dollars directly impact Wyoming wildlife, The Fund is a lean and efficient organization, currently operating with one full-time staff member. In order to continue raising funds for wildlife projects and initiatives, we are striving to build operational support for the The WYldlife Fund. This will make certain the 'lights stay on' and allow us to focus on our mission to conserve Wyoming wildlife.

»»»» **SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE FUTURE** ««««««

The WYldlife Fund is pleased to announce a
\$350,000 MATCH CHALLENGE

MADE ««««
POSSIBLE &
»»»» **BY**
 **Neiman**
ENTERPRISES, INC.

Pam ^{and} Mike
SCHMID



We need to raise \$350,000 to unlock an additional \$350,000. Your generous donations will be matched 1:1 up to \$350,000.*

»»»» **DOUBLING YOUR GIVING IMPACT** ««««



The funds raised through this campaign, which will conclude on December 31, 2022, will be used to establish the **THRIVE INITIATIVE** to provide operational support for The WYldlife Fund and ensure longterm efforts to advance Wyoming wildlife habitat, research, and education. If you would like to learn more or have your investment added to this match challenge, please call us at (307) 316-3863

* This match challenge is being made possible through a pledged cash donation and pending transaction.

A closing message from THE PRESIDENT'S DESK <<<<

CHRIS MCBARNES | PRESIDENT - THE WYDLIFE FUND

In a year of much uncertainty, The WYldlife Fund [The Fund] has found a way to thrive. This is because of generous supporters like *you*. The wildlife of Wyoming deserves our continued effort, support, and passion. This is exactly what we will continue to deliver.

This year brought with it numerous opportunities to connect with new and old friends. Many of you attended one of our six Evenings of Note with The Fund. We thank our phenomenal hosts: Greg and Loren Hill, Robert "Bob" and Mona Model, Jim and Christy Neiman, Mark and Elizabeth Hamlin, Faith Hamlin, Mayor Patrick and First Lady Judy Collins and our Board of Directors.

The Fund also co-hosted the first annual Golf For Wildlife Outing with our friends at the Muley Fanatic Foundation. It was a fun filled day of golf, music, and fellowship for a great cause with over 60 players and 21 sponsors. The I-25 Wildlife Crossing Project will receive 100% of the \$7,028 raised through this event.

We were incredibly proud to help fully fund the I-25 Wildlife Crossing Project. This \$3,800,000 crossing project between Buffalo and Kaycee will be under construction in 2022. The Fund raised \$360,000 for this critical project and helped generate an additional \$1,385,000 in matching funds. The Fund's participation in this effort is a direct reflection of the success that is possible in the future.

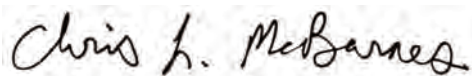
The Fund was also proud to financially support the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's Inspire a Kid program along with Hulett Youth Field Days, Wyoming 4-H Foundation's shooting sports program and Joey's Fly Fishing Foundation.

In addition, we launched a brand new website! We encourage you to visit <http://thewyldlifefund.org>. You will find everything from our areas of focus to planned giving resources that can be utilized as you develop your personal giving wishes into the future.

Finally, we have welcomed three new incredible individuals to the The Fund's Board of Directors, Taylor Phillips, Greg Hill, and Faith Hamlin. Taylor, Greg, and Faith bring a wealth of wisdom, energy, and experience to our team. You can learn more about them on our new and improved website!

We look forward to an even better year in 2022. It's all about the wildlife of Wyoming and we will continue to roll up our sleeves and do our part.

All the best,



Chris McBarnes

