2019 annual report
LANDS
WATERS
WILDLIFE
If there is one constant in life, it is change. Seasons change, political winds shift, and new viruses emerge disrupting life as we know it. There is one thing for me, however, that has remained relatively constant and reliable throughout my life – that is the joy, inspiration, and solace I find in Greater Yellowstone.

My mother was raised in the burgeoning metropolis of Mud Lake, Idaho (pop. 397). My earliest memories include family reunions at campgrounds near Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. We gathered at places like Birch Creek, Teton Canyon, and Spencer to fish, ride motorcycles, and hear the latest news about Grandma’s liver or Uncle David’s big buck. These places, and many more since then, grabbed hold of me and haven’t let go.

Through my 17 years at GYC, I have seen a lot of change. In 2019, GYC was again a force for positive change when we successfully completed our ambitious 5-year $10 million Grizzly Bear Campaign, passed the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act protecting more than 30,000 acres from gold mining, helped pass a ballot measure that dedicates $10 million of tax revenue for wildlife highway crossings in Wyoming, and worked with partners to protect 5,200 acres of private land in wildlife migration corridors. Thank you for making these remarkable achievements possible.

We live in uncertain times, but your continued faith in us strengthens our resolve. Together, we create the positive change we want to see in the world, especially right here in Greater Yellowstone. Thank you for supporting our work as we lead the way in protecting this remarkable place, now and for future generations.
YELLOWSTONE BISON

Yellowstone bison descended from the last wild herd in North America and represent the last remaining truly wild, ecologically viable, genetically pure, and wide-ranging population of plains bison in existence. Bison were essential to the spiritual and economic lives of First Nations people across what is today known as North America, and more than 26 tribes have had cultural connections to Yellowstone bison and the lands and resources of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem since time immemorial.

Today, just 4,900 of these iconic bison remain in Yellowstone. Due to park carrying capacity constraints and limited tolerance for these creatures as they migrate into Montana, the Park Service is tragically forced to slaughter hundreds of bison every year.

Imagine a day when Yellowstone bison can roam freely beyond park boundaries. Instead of an annual slaughter, these animals could be restored to tribal and conservation herds elsewhere. By expanding the Yellowstone Bison Quarantine Program, and working with tribes and partners, we can ensure fewer bison are slaughtered and more are sent to tribes that want them. However, there are challenges. Because some Yellowstone bison carry brucellosis, they must first go through quarantine to ensure they are disease-free before being transferred. Restricted space at the existing quarantine facilities and political and legal roadblocks in Montana, have all limited the number of bison quarantined and transferred.

We are working with Yellowstone National Park and our conservation partners on a plan to expand existing quarantine facilities. These efforts will save thousands of bison from slaughter, help preserve the unique Yellowstone bison genome, and support the culture and nutrition of Native Americans. Ultimately, our efforts will contribute to the broader conservation of the species across the West on tribal and public lands. Momentum is building and plans are underway, and your support makes all the difference. Please consider a gift to help bison and other important wildlife in Greater Yellowstone by using the provided envelope in this report.

You can help Yellowstone bison by donating to the quarantine expansion project today!
In the past decade, climate change has become a regular part of our vernacular. Images of climate change impacts across the globe seem more prevalent each year, from wildfires in Australia, to famished polar bears in the Arctic, and flooding in places like Venice.

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem is not immune to climate change. Since 1950, the air temperature of Greater Yellowstone has warmed by an average of 2-3°F, and model projections suggest additional warming as much as 11°F is likely to occur by the end of the century. Climate change will have diverse and far-reaching consequences: affecting extreme weather events, shifting wildlife and fish populations and their habitats, changing rain and snow patterns, impacting water availability, and a range of other effects.

Understanding the science around climate change is critical to informing GYC’s current and future decisions for investing in conservation throughout the ecosystem, particularly in relation to native fish and water conservation. That is why the Greater Yellowstone Coalition recently teamed up with scientists at Montana State University, the University of Wyoming, and the United States Geological Survey to conduct a Greater Yellowstone Climate Assessment. The goal of the project is to take a detailed look at climate impacts on an ecosystem-wide scale. New science analyzing how climate change will affect water within each watershed will be invaluable to decision making. The final report will provide climate and water data in a format that will be usable to stakeholders in the region.

To help inform the report and identify knowledge gaps, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition will conduct thorough listening sessions with diverse stakeholders representing tribes, agriculture producers, federal and state agency biologists, municipal water managers, outdoor recreation and tourism business owners, as well as local conservation leaders. Only by listening to and understanding what information stakeholders use, can we catalyze action to combat the impacts of climate change in our ecosystem.

### COMING UP:

Galvanizing support from thousands of Montanans and businesses for the proposed Montana Headwaters Legacy Act legislation, protecting 337 miles of rivers and streams.

Advocating to make US Highway 20, a highway that bisects wildlife movements along Yellowstone’s western boundary near Island Park, Idaho, safer for people and wildlife.

### ALSO ACCOMPLISHED IN 2019:

- Helped acquire and contributed to 1,800 acres of conservation easements in a crucial mule deer migration corridor that will become anchors for wildlife crossings in southeast Idaho.
- Removed dozens of miles of harmful fences around the ecosystem in key wildlife movement routes.
Also Accomplished in 2019:

- Inspired dozens of our Cody, Wyoming supporters to show support for our public lands in celebrating Wyoming’s first Public Lands Day.
- Collaborated with agencies, hunters, anglers, and agricultural operators in a process to develop proactive projects and policies to conserve and manage over 400,000 acres of crucial wildlife habitat in the Sand Creek deserts of Idaho.

Making Roadways Safer

Greater Yellowstone is home to some of the last remaining large-scale wildlife migrations in North America. Thousands of elk, mule deer, moose, pronghorn, and bighorn sheep migrate seasonally from the high country in and around Yellowstone to lower elevations outside the park. Roads and fences disrupt these migrations. Wildlife, by the hundreds, are hit and killed by vehicles on roads threatening human safety and wildlife populations.

We can make our roads safe and help wildlife move freely by building wildlife crossings (bridges or tunnels, combined with funnel fencing, are proven to reduce collisions by 80-90% and improve wildlife passage).

GYC is partnering with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and several conservation partners to build wildlife crossings across priority Greater Yellowstone highways in Wyoming. We have helped fund research, provided technical expertise into crossing design, and educated stakeholders and communities so they will take action to make our roads safer. Because crossings typically cost thousands to millions of dollars, we support private and public funding to build them.

In Wyoming’s 2020 legislative session, GYC and our partners successfully advocated for $3M of state funding to be dedicated toward priority wildlife crossings projects. One of the highest priority projects is Highway 189 near Dry Piney Creek, an approximately 30-mile highway segment that interrupts the iconic migration path of Wyoming Range mule deer. We supported a successful WYDOT application to secure $14M in federal highways funding toward this $18M project and have raised an additional $200K from other sources to match and supplement these funds. Finally, our work during the Wyoming state legislature resulted in three bills that expand a recently created wildlife conservation account, which will generate even more revenue for crossings.

Much of our work to make it easier for wildlife to move across our highways is because of generous grants from The Volgenau Foundation. Learn more about these projects by visiting our website: greateryellowstone.org/blog.

Coming Up:

- Fighting in Montana’s Supreme Court to uphold our legal victory preventing the flawed permitting of harmful gold mines on private lands near Yellowstone’s northern boundary.
- Assessing wildlife habitat, rivers and stream conditions, and land protection status on the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Wyoming to prepare for the upcoming forest land use plan revision.
The Greater Yellowstone Coalition is committed to sound fiscal management, accountability, and transparency—a commitment that consistently wins us top marks from the nation’s chief watchdogs for charitable organizations. If you’d like additional information beyond this report, please see our audited financial statements and 990s available here: greateryellowstone.org/financials.

In fiscal year 2019, revenue was $3,391,926 and expenses were $3,945,628. We ended the year with net assets of $12,052,800. Our financial success is due to generous bequests, sustaining donations, and restricted funding for key campaigns and projects within the ecosystem. This generosity allows us to think bigger and make lasting investments in our work now, and in the future.

**REVENUE**

- Events: $611,006 (8%)
- Foundations: $793,461 (21%)
- Individual Supporters: $1,311,936 (44%)
- Bequests: $242,080 (8%)

**EXPENSES**

- Conservation Programs: $3,162,093 (80%)
- Fundraising: $370,507 (11%)
- Administration: $413,028 (9%)

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition’s Board of Directors is comprised of dedicated volunteers who bring a broad array of leadership, expertise, and enthusiasm to protecting the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

- Pete Coppolillo, Chair
- Jennifer Wilson, Vice-Chair
- Patrick Dominick, Treasurer
- Georgie Stanley, Secretary
- Taya Cromley
- Abi Devan
- Bea Gordon
- Kitty Griswold
- Thomas Jalkut
- Chris Johns
- Rick Johnson
- Ben Mackay
- Andrew Moore
- Janet Offensend
- Lucinda Reinold
- Diana Simmons
- Ted Turner, emeritus
- Dan Vermillion
- Thomas Winston
- Dan Wenk

**DONOR SPOTLIGHT: SANDY PFEIFFER**

We are so appreciative of people like Sandy who have chosen to include a provision for Greater Yellowstone Coalition in their estate plan. Sandy’s passion for bison created this future legacy gift. We can’t thank Sandy enough - and so many others who make this generous commitment to GYC. If you’re considering a planned gift to GYC, please contact Melissa Richey at 406-556-2834 to discuss your options.

**KEEPING YOU INFORMED**

We continually update our online sources and send two reports annually to show the impact of your support. Donors like you make a difference. Thank you for all you do for us and Greater Yellowstone!

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

- GreaterYellowstoneCoalition
- @GYCnews
- @greateryellowstone

**BLOG:**

greateryellowstone.org/blog

**EMAIL UPDATES:**

greateryellowstone.org/signup

**ANNUAL REPORTS:**

greateryellowstone.org/financials
CARES ACT | NEW GIVING INCENTIVES

Did you know the CARES Act provides charitable giving incentives? The Act lifts the existing cap on annual contributions for those who itemize, raising it from 60% of adjusted gross income to 100% for individuals, and from 10% to 25% for corporations. It also provides a new, above-the-line deduction for total charitable contributions up to $300. This will be a universal, non-itemized deduction, so it applies to all taxpayers for contributions made in 2020 and claimed on tax forms next year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL MELISSA RICHEY AT 406.586.1593.

GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION TAX ID: 81-0414042 / PHOTO: DAVE SHOWALTER / COVER PHOTO: CINDY GOEDDEL