

# WILD BADLANDS

## BADLANDS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

www.badlandsconservationalliance.org

AUTUMN 2014 ISSUE No. 36

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fellow BCA Members,

It has been one of the joys of my life to serve as president of the BCA board of directors for the past three years. As with any volunteer activity that one does with a willing heart, I have received so much more that I have given!

Thanks for the companionship and the mentoring: to every member who has participated in a BCA outing or an annual meeting potluck, I have enjoyed your company and I have learned something of value from each of you. Thanks to everyone who has served on the board during my term as a board member. Finding a group like BCA with deeply-held shared values and a commitment to work for those values with civility and integrity has been truly inspirational for me.

A very special thanks to our Executive Director Jan Swenson whose passion and energy make it so easy for the board to look good.

As we watched our last hope for the introduction of a Wilderness bill fade away for the near term (*please know that we are **not** giving up on Wilderness for the long term*) with Kent Conrad's departure from the U.S. Senate in December 2012, we turned our attention primarily to state governance issues and federal agency actions. As every BCA member knows, with the multitude of issues impacting our beloved Badlands, there has been no shortage of work in that arena.

We have learned that increased attention from the national media is the most effective way to encourage positive action from our state government. The issues around flaring, spills, waste disposal, and rail safety have each seen positive responses from various aspects of ND state government *only* when pressure from outside the state begins to build.

The cynic in me believes that's because the money to fund oil development comes almost entirely from out-of-state and because the markets for the petroleum products are largely out-of-state. So it matters when equity bankers in New York decide that flaring is a bad thing or when the State of California begins to suggest that Bakken oil might not be welcome in that state.

Jan Swenson has worked tirelessly to enhance BCA's visibility. She has succeeded in becoming one of a very few "go-to" people for visitors to North Dakota who want an environmental perspective on events occurring in the oil patch. She has granted numerous interviews and given many tours for visiting journalists, activists, and members of national and worldwide conservation

organizations as they seek to understand the transformation taking place in western ND.

Your BCA board and staff have also put a significant amount of time and energy over the past two years into increased cooperation and collaboration with other groups having similar or related missions.

Included are groups whose focus in ND is specific to a certain geographic place, such as the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Friends of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, all of which have as their main mission within ND the preservation of the integrity of our only national park, especially the tiny Elkhorn Unit and the area surrounding it; and the Killdeer Mountain Alliance (KMA) whose members focus on that specific geographic area.

BCA also works with groups having a statewide focus such as the ND Natural Resources Trust, the Dakota Resources Council (DRC), the ND Chapter of The Wildlife Society, the Dacotah Chapter of the Sierra Club, and the Coalition for Clean Water, Wildlife, and Parks.

We participate in the Northern Plains Conservation Network (NPCN) which is a collaboration of more than 25 organizations working together to conserve the wildlife, habitats, and ecological processes of the Northern Great Plains. Participating in the NPCN has introduced BCA to people with connections to global organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund.

The increased level of information-sharing and activity-coordination has allowed us to have access at the very highest levels of the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, something we likely could not have accomplished on our own.

As Jan reports elsewhere in this newsletter, BCA continues its tradition of submitting comment letters to state and federal agencies on many proposed actions that threaten the Badlands. BCA is making a difference in developing public policy at the intersection between the free market economy and necessary protective measures for the environment and values that North Dakotans hold dear.

On behalf of your board of directors, I encourage and challenge each member of this wonderful organization to contribute as much you can. We need your time, your energy, your ideas, and your tax-deductible donations.

Connie Triplett, Grand Forks, ND



*Autumn along the Little Missouri*  
by Rich Brauhn

FOUNDED IN 1999.  
INCORPORATED IN THE STATE OF  
NORTH DAKOTA SEPTEMBER 2001.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*SW North Dakota in the Fall*  
by Rich Brauhn

- BCA gathered for our 2013 Annual Meeting in the Community Room of the Dickinson Area Public Library the afternoon of Saturday, November 2. Following potluck lunch and a brief business meeting, group discussion focused on current issues including the proposed Basin Electric transmission line past the Killdeer Mountains, the “eye of the needle” and the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the Special Places policy as proposed by Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, the Dakota Prairie Grasslands Oil and Gas RFD analysis and Supplemental EIS, the proposed Little Missouri River bridge Draft EIS, and the proposed Theodore Roosevelt Expressway expansion as it would impact the Park.
- Elected at the 2013 annual meeting, Rich Brauhn and Lynn Morgenson joined ongoing board members for the annual Board Retreat held in Bismarck on March 15. Concentrated hard work on issues, strategies, finances and capacity building were addressed at this full day meeting - with participants taking a much deserved break for lunch and a refreshing visit to the Birds in Art exhibit at the Heritage Center.
- Join BCA staff in thanking your Board members for their attention to organizational business, whether by face-to-face meetings, email or phone. Special appreciation to retiring Board members Margi, Tom, Carl and Connie, the latter three having served the maximum three consecutive terms allowed by BCA bylaws. Their dedication has been remarkable! Connie Triplett as past president will continue on the Board for 2015 in an advisory capacity.
- BCA committees for 2013 included Education (Carl Sorensen, Chair), Communications (Margi Coyle, Chair) and Funding & Development (Tom Dahle, Chair). Members at large are always encouraged to get in touch as you see yourselves adding to the effectiveness of committee work.
- BCA’s newsletter *Wild Badlands* is the work of our Communications Committee. Thanks to past editor Mariah Lancaster and to current editor Rich Brauhn.
- Thanks to dedicated funding from the Tortuga Foundation, BCA has employed a professional grant writer. Bonnie Palecek, a BCA member, has over 30 years experience in the non-profit sector. BCA staff and Palecek meet regularly on Monday mornings to further BCA efforts to expand our funding base. Wish us well.
- A year-end membership drive proved successful in 2013. Watch for your 2014 renewal mailing to arrive around Thanksgiving – a perfect time for recommitting to our BCA mission. Each new or renewing member is an asset. Rally friends and family to join – membership is available via BCA’s webpage.
- Thanks to those individual BCA members who have gifted our mission with generous contributions well beyond customary membership dues. Each \$25 membership is the hammer and nails that builds us. Those of you having given \$2500 or \$1000 or \$400 or \$250 or \$100 or \$75 or \$50 are the wind that lifts us higher. You each know who you are.
- BCA held outings:
  - Earth Day at the North Unit – Saturday, April 26, 2014**

Sometimes ya’ just gotta play and so we did, following David Kingman on one of

his favorite off-trail routes in the northeast corner of Theodore Roosevelt Wilderness. Conditions were beautiful, if breezy.

Gourmet chocolate substituted nicely for champagne as we celebrated a recent win. Efforts by TRNP & BCA in cooperation with Horizon Oilfield Services resulted in the withdrawal of an application to build a saltwater disposal facility near the Park’s northern boundary. Much thanks to all involved including CEO George Tingo.

**Green, Green Grass of Home – Saturday, June 28, 2014**

In early May, the South Unit of TRNP implemented a prescribed burn over 2500 acres east of Wind Canyon from the Park’s scenic road to Jones Creek Trail. With the aid of clay buttes, moist drainage and areas of bare ground, fire technicians created a mosaic of burned and unburned areas as expected in a naturally occurring fire.

Fuels specialist Cory Andvik and seasonal fire technician Anthony Schultz briefed us at the visitor center and shared stories & slides of the actual fire before re-joining us at the Jones Creek trailhead to show off their fire truck and equipment. BCA gained a real appreciation of the labor and technology of prescribed burns. Plus, that drip torch demonstration was pretty cool! Thanks, fire guys!

Our actual hike began just east of the Roundup Horse Camp with pronghorn putting on a memorable game of chase as we approached the burn area – newly luxuriant with green grass and exuberant wildflowers.

Participants kept an eye on the darkening sky, but we made good tracks prior to lightning and big cold drops of rain forcing us off the ridge and into the

bottoms. Our goal was cut short, but we made up for it with good conversation at the Cottonwood Picnic Area. A good day.

**50th Anniversary Celebration  
of The Wilderness Act –  
Saturday & Sunday,  
September 6 & 7, 2014**

Between Friday evening and Saturday morning arrivals at Sully Creek State Park, a goodly number of BCA-ers gathered from near and far to greet Saturday's Bullion Butte (*Suitable for Wilderness*) destination. While some hikers stopped midway up the butte's eastern flank to muse and watch the autumn light play on Badlands landscape, veteran Bullion hiker Craig Kilber lead the majority to the top for the spectacular 360-degree view and a mandatory visit to the stone house on a 40-acre private inholding within the U-shaped canyon of Bullion's southern face.

Saturday evening brought a well tended campfire (thanks, Greg) for our celebration of The Wilderness Act, replete with scrumptious cake provided by Connie. We even serenaded the night skies with a BCA rendition of Happy Birthday Wilderness. Coyotes seemed to like it!

Less vigorous but equally fulfilling, our trip into TRNP's south unit Wilderness on

Sunday morning to explore the Petrified Forest topped off a great overnight. Goodbyes were slow in coming – always a good sign!

- 2014 has been a year of pedal-to-the-metal darn hard work for BCA in our efforts to protect and preserve the Badlands landscape of western North Dakota. Some actions have become routine as monthly watch-dogging and testimony at the ND Department of Minerals Resources' monthly Oil and Gas Division hearings. BCA has written letters on 53 individual cases in the last year and appeared at the hearings to voice our concerns.

TRNP regularly appears on cases impacting the Park. BCA actively urges participation by other state and federal agencies, and we have seen some mild improvement in that direction from the USFS and ND Parks and Rec.

Similarly, we attend the majority of ND Industrial Commission meetings, often to follow-up on cases, frequently to hear report on industry developments available in no other venue. Attorney General Stenehjem recently referred to BCA as "eagle eyes" and we take that as a compliment.

- The nearly two-year-old Elkhorn Strategy Team continues to meet by monthly

conference call and by email on a regular basis. A face-to-face Fargo meeting on January 25th of 2014 preceded an afternoon Hunting Heritage Summit open to the public and team organizations.

The team's concentration on the Elkhorn Ranch Unit of TRNP and USFS-managed Elkhorn Ranchlands had spurred two joint letters in December 2014: the first to USFS Chief Tom Tidwell and the second to Interior Secretary Sally Jewell.

Team member ELPC (Environmental Law and Policy Center) hosted a Bakken Strategy Summit on June 6 & 7 in Bismarck, drawing in additional national organizations showing interests in ND's Bakken - Ceres, the Environmental Defense Fund (flaring), and the Natural Resources Defense Council (water) among them. Focus was on regulation and policy, both state and federal.

BCA, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Boone and Crockett Club, the Friends of the Elkhorn Ranch and the National Parks Conservation Association each filed letters of objection in opposition to the Record of Decision for proposed gravel mining on the USFS Elkhorn Ranchlands and within the viewshed of the Elkhorn Ranch Unit of

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## NEW BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

### Craig Kilber

Growing up in Dickinson, North Dakota allowed me the opportunity to explore just about every butte and ravine in the Badlands. From hunting, hiking, mountain biking, and rock climbing - yes, it is possible to rock climb on Sentinel Butte - each part of the Badlands offered something different for me to enjoy. For five summers during college, I worked on the Maah Daah Hey trail crew for the US Forest Service. While on the trail crew, I was able to build new trail, maintain existing trail, construct campgrounds, and fight wild land forest fires. It also gave me an appreciation for the Badlands' rugged environment and all that offers. Although I currently reside in Fargo where I am a Business Development Analyst for InterceptEFT, I spend as much time as I can in the Badlands.

With more and more development of the Badlands' natural resources, there needs to be more attention to preservation and responsible

development to ensure future generations can also enjoy the Badlands. I joined the Badlands Conservation Alliance because I wanted to be a part of a group that not only wants to protect the area, but also enjoys the Badlands for what they are. As a new Board member, I will bring new ideas to the group to help promote our goals, increase our membership, and better communicate with our current membership and the public.



*Craig Kilber*

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TRNP. A resolution meeting was held on July 21, 2014 and all parties continue to push for an exchange of the gravel minerals. Final resolution is pending.

- BCA attended the NDCWS annual meeting *Coping with North Dakota's Changing Landscape* on February 12-14 in Mandan where we for the first time heard Minerals Dept. Director Lynn Helms claim 5 generations into the future for final reclamation of the Bakken. We better hang tough. And our kids' kids' kids' kids.
- The Special Places policy put forward before the ND Industrial Commission by Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem became an Extraordinary Places policy and finally a Drilling Permit Review Policy as adopted on March 3, 2014. The name changes themselves tell the story.

BCA was intimately involved in the process supporting the AG's aim to identify and protect some portion of western ND's landscape and noted landmarks from the negative impacts of oil development. The resulting NDIC policy is much weaker than proponents' original intent with private lands removed from consideration and language changes that minimize effectiveness. The policy as interpreted currently by the ND Oil and Gas Division comes into play only at the application for permit to drill a well – much too late for beneficial mitigation to be totally effective.

The policy campaign did, however, force public discussion to the forefront and made clear the allies and opponents of

conservation in ND. Furthermore, it was the first time a high-ranking state official actually said there even were places worth protecting from development. The policy identifies 18 special places, some of them as large as the shoreline of Lake Sakakawea or the Little Missouri River corridor, some as specific as Pretty or Sentinel Butte.

BCA must be vigilant in defending what we have during the upcoming ND Legislative session, and continue to rally for improvement in both content and implementation.

- The Special Places effort also resulted in establishment of an ongoing working group that meets on a nearly weekly basis to share information, coordinate actions, and instigate joint meetings with federal & state agencies and influential individuals. It is another "team" worth keeping.
- BCA attended the Dickinson May 9th Bureau of Land Management's *Forum on Venting & Flaring of Gas Produced from Onshore Federal* and submitted formal comments calling for re-definitions of waste, tighter regulation, more strident monitoring standards, and attention to environmental and health costs.
- BCA continues to monitor grazing activities on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands albeit with somewhat less detail than in pre-Bakken days.

We have been monitoring meetings facilitated by ND Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring that revisit the September 2006 Livestock Grazing

Record of Decision for the DPGs. Primary participants seem to include grazing association reps and DPG Supervisor Dennis Neitzke. Congressional, DTL and NDGF staff also attend.

Similarly, when the ND Congressional delegation hosted USFS Chief Tom Tidwell's visit to the state with a roundtable discussion in Dickinson on May 30th, BCA was there. The majority of the attendees were permittees and the main topic grazing, but oil impacts on ranching did come up. Senator Hoeven acknowledged BCA in his comments.

- BCA has participated in the NEPA process for the North Billings County Allotment Management Plan Revisions since 2009. We filed formal objection notice to the Record of Decision on the project on April 24th on the grounds that an additional alternative was being offered without proper analysis or public participation as required by NEPA.

A resolution hearing was held in Dickinson on June 2. Objectors at the table included a representative of the Medora Grazing Association, three additional public lands ranchers for themselves, the ND Game and Fish Department, Western Watersheds Project and BCA.

- On May 20th and 21st, BCA hosted the bi-annual meeting of the Northern Plains Conservation Network in Medora, ND. This network of 25 organizations and 80 individuals working in conservation across the region and including Canada focuses on landscape scale protection and

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Badlands Conservation Alliance was held in the Makoche Studios in Bismarck at 1 PM on November 1st with 42 members in attendance. After a potluck dinner with many delicious dishes and luscious desserts brought by members, a short business meeting was held.

Executive Director Jan Swenson gave a report regarding last year's accomplishments and BCA activities, which are included in this newsletter. She also reviewed the BCA budget. The current balance is \$41,886. Upcoming membership dues will augment this budget.

President Connie Triplett gave a report outlining BCA's continuing work to establish Prairie Legacy Wilderness in the Little Missouri National Grassland and current efforts regarding oil and gas development impacts. She also indicated how BCA testimony had been vital in ND Oil and Gas Division hearings, on State School Land leasing and other conservation measures. This will be Connie's last year serving on the Board and as President. As Past President she

will continue in an advisory capacity for one additional year. Triplett's *Message from the President* as appeared in the 2014 annual meeting report opens this newsletter.

Mr. Chad Sexton who is the GIS Analyst at Theodore Roosevelt National Park gave a presentation regarding the use of GIS technology to map view sheds within the park. Over 92,000 view shed points have been mapped. The maps will be used by the Park Service at future oil and gas hearings and as regards other proposed projects that impact the Park. TRNP has shared the analysis with the Bureau of Land Management to increase the coordination between federal agencies.

In the open discussion part of the meeting, many issues were brought forth from the floor and were discussed by the membership with regard to information and strategy. The USDA Rural Utilities Service Decision to support routing the Basin Electric transmission line in the Killdeer Battlefield area and through the Long X corridor

restoration. BCA has participated since the network's inception nearly 15 years ago.

The shared mission involves diverse participants ranging from the Alberta Wilderness Association to Defenders of Wildlife to Lower Brule and Oglala tribal entities to the Wildlife Conservation Society, the World Wildlife Fund and BCA.

It was an excellent opportunity to educate on oil and gas development in western North while sharing the landscape's inherent values in need of advocates across the region and nation. Special thanks to additional tour guides Mike McEnroe (NDCWS), Valerie Naylor (TRNP), and Jay Frederick (McKenzie Ranger District) for the generosity of their time and expertise.

- As should be clear by now, 2014 has been a year of coalition building – an outcome much needed and worthy of celebration. We give special recognition and thanks to one of our earliest and most active allies – the ND Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

2014 is the fourth year NDCWS members Al Sapa and Mike McEnroe organized and hosted an annual Energy Tour, getting a dedicated bunch of activists out on the ground to survey up close and often uncomfortably the impacts of oil and gas development in western ND. Forum reporter Amy Dalrymple accompanied us throughout.

This year's June 6th through the 9th

*BCA's Gerry Groenewold gives an impromptu geology lesson*  
by Graham Swenson



tour focused on spills, leaks and aging infrastructure. We visited a saltwater pipeline spill at the Shade ranch on Tracy Mountain, a flood-related oil spill on the Yellowstone floodplain within the Oxbow Wildlife Management Area, old and failing infrastructure being put into use by current Bakken activity on USFS lands in the Charleson Field on the south shores of Lake Sakakawea. Each stop included expert guides - whether private, state or federal.

Sapa and McEnroe always follow up with a report in Dakota Country Magazine. Check out the September 2014 issue for details.

- The National Parks Conservation Association featured TRNP in the summer issue of its National Parks magazine with quotes from Superintendent Naylor, Chief of Resource Management Bill Whitworth, ND Natural Resources

Trust's Keith Trego, Theodore's great-great grandson Winthrop Roosevelt and BCA's Jan Swenson. Authored by Melanie D. G. Kaplan, it asks "What Would Teddy Do" and is worth finding on the net: <http://www.npca.org/news/magazine/all-issues/2014/summer/drilling-down.html>

- The Western Land Commissioners Oil Impact Symposium was held in Bismarck in July. BCA attended that portion relating to wildlife habitat and the Endangered Species Act.
- BCA's ongoing opposition to oil and gas leasing of state school lands within or impacting *Suitable for Wilderness* and other sensitive habitat that is managed by the ND Department of Trust lands (DTL) continues. Fourteen tracts in five separate sections within or adjacent to Bullion Butte and Kendley Plateau were again nominated for lease sale at the

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and across the Little Missouri River was identified as an on-going issue which will have to be watched closely by BCA membership. Difficulty with engineering the planned eastern leg of the proposed transmission loop could lead to further impacts to TRNP. The status of the bridge and gravel pit development near the Elkhorn Ranch of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park is also a major issue that has not been resolved and will bear watching.

Four members were elected to the Board of Directors. Ms. Christine Hogan, a Bismarck attorney, has enjoyed the Badlands since moving to North Dakota from Colorado in 1975. Mr. Craig Kilber is a business development analyst from Fargo and is originally from Dickinson. Mr. David Kingman hails from Minneapolis and now resides in Watford City where he is involved in workforce housing. Finally, Ms. Tama Smith comes to us from Belfield where she owns and operates Prairie Fire Pottery with her husband. We welcome all these new Board Directors and look forward to their ideas and energies.

A special recognition was given to Ms. Valerie Naylor who is retiring from her service as the Superintendent of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Valerie has been a good friend and comrade to BCA in its endeavors to preserve the Badlands and the natural beauty of western North Dakota.

Ms. Naylor presented BCA with a \$1,000 gift and pledged to continue her support of BCA as a member. BCA greatly appreciates the support Valerie has provided the organization and we wish her well in her retirement.

The meeting ended with door prizes ranging from jars of jelly to a bottle of "Bison" bourbon being awarded. All in all, the meeting was a great success and it is heartwarming to see so many members from all over the state in attendance. We invite all members to attend the next meeting and look forward to meeting you.

Rich Brauhn, Board of Directors

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August 2014 auction. ND Chapter of the Wildlife Society's Mike McEnroe and BCA Swenson met with DTL Commissioner Lance Gaebe, Minerals Division Director Drew Combs and Surface Management Director Mike Brand on July 17th to ask that the parcels be withdrawn.

Protest and negotiation resulted in formal suspension of the 14 tracts by Gaebe at the July 31 meeting of the Land Board. Further discussion by the Board turned consideration of possible exchange with other federal or state minerals over to the Attorney General's office for initial review.

At the encouragement of Minerals Director Combs, McEnroe and Swenson attended the September 23 meeting of the BLM Dakota Resource Advisory Council in Sturgis, SD to state our case for exchange and support of HR 4901 recently introduced in the US Congress, which would offer a mechanism for such exchanges across the nation's western states.

- The Sporting and Oil Industry Forum met twice in 2014 – March 25 and August 12. Conservation participants met several times prior to the March meeting to redefine our expectations for the Forum and to develop as requested a number of "projects" to bring forward to the larger group for consideration and funding.

Conservation framed project proposals at the landscape level with no cap on dollars. Follow-up Forum discussion made it clear that industry wants only small, feel-good projects and if there is any future for the Forum it lies in mutually educational opportunities, not policy or landscape scale assistance.

What role BCA may or may not play in the Forum's future is undecided, but we did fulfill a commitment to presenting on Wilderness, and specifically Prairie Legacy Wilderness at the August meeting.

- The Forum discussion above underscores BCA's support for the Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks initiative. The cost of doing conservation in North Dakota is considerable and will only grow. The current Outdoor Heritage Fund does not begin to meet needs. Thanks to

all the individual BCA members who have devoted their volunteer time to the campaign. Now get out and vote.

- Last year's annual report stated that we'd "hang tough" on the proposed Basin Electric 345kV transmission line as it impacted the Killdeer Mountains, the eye of the needle twist Long X Divide and Lone Butte roadless areas, and the North Unit of TRNP.

We continued to work with the USFS in both the Supervisor's office and the McKenzie Ranger District throughout this period urging the agency to deny a special use permit allowing the proposed line through the eye of the needle. We argued in favor of what is acknowledged as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative



*Northern Plains Conservation Network tour at Buck Hill in the South Unit of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park by Jan Swenson*

in the FEIS: double circuiting the lines east of the Killdeer Mountains and therein crossing the Little Missouri Badlands only once rather than twice as Basin's preferred alternative would force.

BCA attended work sessions and regular meetings on the project before the ND Public Service Commission. A PSC corridor decision for the HWY 85 portion of the project was delayed on April 10th at the request of Commissioner Fedorchak but was approved unanimously on April 23rd.

On January 16, 2014 BCA attended the Rural Utilities Services hearing on the Supplemental Draft EIS and submitted formal comments on January 31. The release of the Final Impact Statement in May of 2014 prompted BCA to

submit additional comments on June 27th, countering their dismissal of both eastern alternatives as a misapplication of the NEPA process requirement for a range of reasonable alternatives that adequately satisfied purpose and need. We also requested that they fully analyze an alternative that would co-locate the existing WAPA (Western Area Power Authority) line with the Basin line through the Little Missouri River Valley and past the Park should that alternative be the final decision.

Prior to release by the USFS of their Draft Record of Decision on the project, local communications made it clear that strong, inflexible ND Congressional pressure was being applied in Basin's favor.

BCA filed a USFS objection on July 22, which was accepted, and a resolution meeting was held on August 21 in Bismarck. Seventeen participants were in attendance. In the room were Supervisor Neitzke, Jan Swenson for BCA, and Chief of Resource Management Bill Whitworth for TRNP as an interested but unofficial party. On the phone were 3 Basin reps, Dennis Rankin for RUS, a member of the Louis Berger Group, 2 team members from WAPA and 7 additional Forest Service personnel from Regional offices out of Missoula and from the McKenzie Ranger District.

Again, BCA made our case for the protection of the Little Missouri River Valley, the National Park, Long X Divide and Lone Butte. We also spoke on behalf of the historical significance of the Killdeer Mountains. We objected on the grounds of a failed NEPA process, failure to fully comply with the October 2009 Memorandum of Understanding for siting of transmission lines on federal lands, and insisted that full analysis be given to collocation through the Little Missouri River Valley as permissible under a variance offered in *Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO) standard TPL-503-MRO-01, System Performance, Section R1.2*.

The DPG ROD signed by Supervisor Neitzke on September 9th supported

Basin's preferred alternative creating a loop and crossing the Little Missouri Badlands not once, but twice. On September 13, the RUS published their ROD in support of Alternative C, Basin's preferred alternative.

BCA recognizes the increasing demand for electricity in western North Dakota due to oil and gas development. We wish hardship on no affected parties. We do, however, remain aghast that a long respected rural electric cooperative could not find it reasonable to pursue a route and conditions necessary to protect at the very least the integrity of a National Park and the many layered historical values of the Killdeer Mountains.

But this story is not done. Recently a Basin Electric employee listened intently to BCA concerns about the segment up the east side of the Killdeer Mountains and potential negative impacts to the Little Missouri River valley and Bear Den Research Natural Area. "Why," she said, "don't we listen to folks with this kind of knowledge in the first place?" Good question.

BCA strives that there will not be a day down the road when losses to natural habitat and western landscapes are so blatant and so pervasive they can no longer be ignored. If such a fate should be, fingers will point at the complicit. BCA should be proud we were in the arena.

- September 24th BCA was again in the field – this time with the Northern Great Plains Advisory Committee for the World Wildlife Fund. Six prestigious, influential

and dedicated members of the Committee from across the nation joined three WWF staffers, including BCA friend Martha Kauffman, director of their NGP program.

It is beneficial to all to have such exchange of on-the-ground realities, opportunities for collaboration and best steps for moving forward. Again, thanks to Connie Triplett, Mike McEnroe and Valerie Naylor for sharing their time and expertise.

- BCA members attended the retirement party for TRNP Superintendent Valerie Naylor on September 28th in Medora. It is difficult to see her go, but we wish her the very best. And, will encourage her vow of continued advocacy for the wild lands of western ND.

BCA presented her with a large embroidered North Dakota pillow – so she won't forget us, and that she may catch up on recent years' sleep deprivation prompted by Bakken overload. Her gift, paid for by donations, may be found here if you want a peek: <http://www.catstudio.com/shop/pillows/hand-embroidered/hand-embroidered-states/north-dakota-hand-embroidered-pillow.html>

- Perhaps the final time in the office of Superintendent Naylor, BCA joined NDCWS members on October 1st in response to Naylor's invitation to bring the conservation perspective to bear on visiting NPS Deputy Director Peggy O'Dell's assessment of oil and gas development impacts on TRNP and surrounding public lands. We made our case well.

- Earthjustice continues to represent us in our petition for intervenor status in lawsuits filed by the State of North Dakota and the four counties on the Little Missouri National Grassland, which claims ownership of the sections lines on those public lands, would allow for road building and increase difficulties for Wilderness designation.

On October 6th EJ provided oral argument before the US 8th Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Paul, MN. We'll keep you posted.

- Finally, thanks to Mary and Rob Sand for keeping BCA abreast of the efforts of the Killdeer Mountain Alliance and to BCA members who enhance KMA's work. To David for his ability to connect the dots. To Connie for her endless advisory capacity and for always broadening the thought.

To the un-named employee of the Department of Minerals who "blessed" BCA's testimony at Oil and Gas hearings "cuz our hearts cannot change" – an unexpected kindness on a stormy afternoon. Thanks to Judy for her continuing posts, and to Jim and Jim for their many contributions, both past and present. Thanks for the hugs from unexpected, special places. And, to each and all of you for the warmth of community and place, which rises and finds a home in BCA. Even as we do battle for our homeland.

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### **The Honorable Jack Dalrymple**

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All offices may be contacted by email forms on their respective websites.

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# BADLANDS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

A VOICE FOR WILD NORTH DAKOTA PLACES

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*Badlands Autumn by Rich Brauhn*

<http://badlandsconservationalliance.org/>



*World Wildlife Fund's Northern Great Plains Advisory Committee at the US Forest Service Burning Coal Vein Campground in the Little Missouri National Grassland by Connie Triplett*