

The Path to Conserving 30 Percent of the Planet by 2030

PERSPECTIVES FROM INDIGENOUS AND
LOCAL CONSERVATION LEADERS



CONTENTS

Introduction from
Wyss Foundation President
Molly McUsic

4

Protecting Tallurutiup Imanga
& Tuvaijuittuq
Nunavut Territory, Canada
P.J. Akeeagok

6

Protecting Gayini Nimmie-Caira
New South Wales, Australia
Rene Woods

10

Northern Rangelands Trust
Kenya
Tom Lalampaa

14

Badger-Two Medicine
Blackfeet Traditional Territory
Montana, United States
Kendall Edmo

18

Cover:

P.J. Akeeagok
**by the Qikiqtani Inuit
Association**

Tom Lalampaa
by Ami Vitale

Kendall Edmo
by Rebecca Drobis

Rene Woods
by The Nature Conservancy

Inside Cover:

Northern Rangeland Trust
by Ami Vitale



Tony Bynum
Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance

INTRODUCTION FROM WYSS FOUNDATION PRESIDENT, MOLLY MCUSIC

The planet’s lands, waters, and wildlife are in worse shape than previously understood: a majority of the Earth’s surface has been severely altered and more than one million species are imminently at risk of extinction. The planet is facing a nature crisis.

These are among the chief findings of a report issued earlier this year by the more than 450 scientists who form the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), a panel that was commissioned by the United Nations to study the condition of nature on the planet. Despite the bleak news presented by the assessment, the report’s authors are clear that there is still time to change course and safeguard nature, if the global community acts rapidly and purposefully.

Stemming the loss of wildlife—and sustaining the lands and waters that support local communities and economies—will require our collective efforts to rapidly conserve far more of the planet in its natural state. In fact, to safeguard the vast majority of life on the planet, science shows that at least half of the Earth should be conserved in a natural condition. As an interim step toward reaching this “Half Earth” goal, a growing coalition of scientists, nonprofit organizations, and governments have committed to protecting 30 percent of the planet by 2030. Reaching this goal will require collaboration across all continents, governments, and communities.

Indigenous peoples and local communities, in particular, are playing a critical leadership role in developing strategies for conserving lands, waters, and wildlife. Globally, indigenous communities

manage or hold tenure over lands that contain 80 percent of the world’s remaining plant and animal diversity. Further, studies have found that lands and waters overseen by indigenous peoples and local communities are far more likely to remain unaltered—or, at least, less degraded—by human activities. These trends are not by mere coincidence: indigenous peoples and local communities are deploying a variety of time-tested and innovative strategies to conserve lands, oceans, and wildlife. For the sake of all living beings, we believe this work should be supported, scaled-up, and replicated across the globe by supporting the rights of indigenous peoples in compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and free, prior, and informed consent.

Since the Wyss Foundation’s establishment in 1998, we have taken a “one place at a time” approach to conservation by supporting locally-led conservation efforts in the United States and—more recently—elsewhere in North America, South America, Africa, Europe, and Australia. Along the way, we have sought to listen to and learn from partners, grantees, and communities who are committed to conserving the natural world that supports us all.

This report documents the perspectives of four conservation and community leaders who have been intimately involved in successful, indigenous peoples and local community-led conservation projects. We are grateful to each of these leaders for their remarkable work protecting areas that are important to their communities, and for being willing to share their experiences. Their perspectives offer valuable insights into how the global community can, in partnership with indigenous peoples and local communities, accelerate the pace of nature conservation around the world, and succeed in protecting at least 30 percent of the planet by 2030.

The Wyss Foundation is proud to have provided funding to help support these efforts, but make no mistake—these areas are only protected because of the incredible work of these four leaders and their communities. I hope that you are as inspired by these stories of success as we are.

Molly
Molly McUsic
President
The Wyss Foundation

KEY STATS

The world’s 370 million indigenous people make up only five percent of the total human population, yet manage and/or hold land tenure over:

 At least **25 percent** of the planet’s lands ([source](#)).

 **35 percent** of the remaining land areas with minimal human intervention ([source](#)).

 Approximately **35 percent** of all formally protected areas on the planet ([source](#)).

 Lands that contain approximately **80 percent** of the world’s biodiversity ([source](#)).

Protecting Tallurutiup Imanga & Tuvaijuittuq

NUNAVUT TERRITORY, CANADA



Qikiqtani Inuit Association

By P.J. Akeagok, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association

P.J. Akeagok was first elected president of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) in 2014. Originally from Canada's most northern community, Grise Fiord, Akeagok has devoted his career to representing Inuit in Nunavut. Prior to becoming QIA's president, Akeagok served in numerous roles with Inuit organizations, including Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

For me, Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area and Tuvaijuittuq Marine Protected Area are the waters and sea ice that frame my home community, Ausuittuq, or Grise Fiord as you might know it.

I have a photograph of my community on the wall of my office in Iqaluit, the capital city of Canada's Nunavut Territory. It's a reminder of where I come from. Grise Fiord is a tight-knit hamlet of resilient Inuit, a testament to what a small group can achieve when working together. It is the northernmost community in Canada, lying over 1000km north of the Arctic Circle. It's also a beautiful place, picturesque and framed by sparkling white glacial peaks and skirted by a pristine blue ocean teeming with marine life. I remember living a rich life made

possible by the sea—our seasonal harvest of nattiit (seal), aiviit (walrus), iqaluit (char) and qilalugat (beluga).

This year, as the President of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association—an organization committed to protecting and promoting Inuit rights across Canada's Qikiqtani (or Baffin) Region—I was able to help facilitate securing protection for two critical marine areas by overseeing the negotiation of the Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement for Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area and Agreement for the interim protection of Tuvaijuittuq Marine Protected Area. Together, Tallurutiup Imanga and Tuvaijuittuq represent nearly seven-and-a-half percent of Canada's marine and coastal territory, an area slightly larger than Poland.

These are key areas that border my home community of Grise Fiord and include important habitat for marine mammals and multi-year ice zones needed to regulate our climate and sustain our communities. Inuit have always protected these waters, icescapes and wildlife. We are the stewards of the High Arctic.

Approximately 4,000 people live in Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, and Clyde River, the five impacted High Arctic communities adjacent to Tallurutiup Imanga, and 94 percent are Inuit. The area is used extensively; in some cases Inuit travel hundreds of kilometers by boat or snowmobile to harvest fish, birds, seals, and other marine mammals for food and clothing.

Tuvaijuittuq houses the multi-year sea ice that sustains much of the organisms that sea mammals live on; it's also a bridge from Canada to Greenland, connecting Inuit across the circumpolar world.

Through the historic agreements that secured protection for Tallurutiup Imanga and Tuvaijuittuq, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association realized the vision of Inuit leaders who have been seeking protection for our waters since the 1960s in the face of growing oil and gas development interest.

By protecting these marine areas, we also secured desperately needed investments in our communities, investments needed to begin to close the equity gap between Nunavut Territory and the rest of Canada. Finally, Inuit in the High Arctic will have small craft harbours and community harbours to safely cast-off boats and harvest food for their families. Because of these agreements Inuit will be able to pursue careers in environmental stewardship and wildlife monitoring through our Nauttiqsuqtiit program.

The Nauttiqsuqtiit, or Inuit stewards, are the eyes and ears of Tallurutiup Imanga—not only

"We are the stewards of the High Arctic."



Qikiqtani Inuit Association

monitoring the region but also harvesting to help feed and benefit our community.

By working as equal partners with the Government of Canada in the spirit of reconciliation, we were able to help protect our environment and provide opportunities for our people.

With the Arctic rapidly warming and the ice-free season getting longer, these investments in marine infrastructure will allow Inuit to better adapt and be resilient to the changing conditions.

HOW WE GOT HERE

These historic agreements would not have been possible if the Qikiqtani Inuit Association had not insisted on a whole-of-government approach with the Government of Canada – and if the federal government was not willing to respect the vision put forward by Inuit and break down the silos in Ottawa.

It took decades, and a government willing to sit at the table with Inuit as equals, to achieve protection for Tallurutiup Imanga. Since the 1980's, Tallurutiup Imanga has been globally recognized by various International groups such as UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) as being an area of ecological, biological, and cultural significance.

The first proposal for the boundary of Tallurutiup Imanga was recommended in December 2010 by the Government of Canada. This boundary was only inclusive of an area of 44,300 km². Inuit did not accept the proposed boundaries, because as proposed, it would not protect the areas important to our community.

In 2011, a Steering Committee was formed including representatives from Parks Canada, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, and the Government of Nunavut's Department of

Environment. Between 2011 and 2016, the committee supervised the completion of various studies. The Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, or Inuit traditional knowledge, gathered during the consultations resulted in a boundary recommendation that reflects the ecological and cultural value of Tallurutiup Imanga to Inuit.

Knowledge from our elders helped the steering committee understand how the ecosystem in the area is connected to Inuit communities and provided information that science could not offer. The result of the input at these sessions expanded the conservation area's boundary by over twice the size the federal government proposed in 2010.

I remember, August 14th, 2017, the day that we officially announced the expanded boundaries for Tallurutiup Imanga with a community celebration in Pond Inlet. That day signalled a turning point in the Inuit-crown relationship for me—it was the day we realized the potential of what we could achieve.

I also remember the joy on August 1st, 2019 in Arctic Bay, when we celebrated the ratification of the Tallurutiup Imanga and Tuvaijuittuq Agreements—the huge crowds gathered in and around the community hall—the excitement and pride Inuit felt for protecting these waters and securing jobs and investments in their community.

I have a vision for Inuit that connects our past and present to a future where every Inuk has access to country food on a daily basis, where good jobs are available for our youth in their home communities, and our local sustainable industries grow because of the availability of reliable infrastructure.

This vision of prosperity, based on a strong conservation economy, is why the Qikiqtani Inuit Association has invested so much time to protect marine areas throughout the Qikiqtani Region.

KEY FACTS

Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area & Tuvaijuittuq Marine Protected Area

THE NAMES:

Inuit believed that Devon Island resembles facial tattoos on a jawline. Tallurut is the Inuktitut name for Devon Island. Imanga means a body of water surrounding an area. This is the origin of the name Tallurutiup Imanga. Tuvaijuittuq means “the ice never melts” in Inuktitut.

COMMUNITY:

Approximately 4,000 people live in the five impacted High Arctic communities adjacent to Tallurutiup Imanga, 94 percent are Inuit.

WILDLIFE:

Narwhal – 75 percent of the global population

Beluga – 20 percent of the Canadian population

Polar bears – largest subpopulation in Canada

Seabird species – some of the largest colonies in the Canadian Arctic

This multi-year sea ice area in Tuvaijuittuq is of critical ecological importance. The organisms living in this area are abundant, diverse, and sustain larger animals such as walrus and bearded seals.

WYSS FOUNDATION INVOLVEMENT:

For the past three years, the Wyss Foundation has supported research and advocacy in the Arctic that helps contribute to Inuit-led conservation priorities.

SIZE:

Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area is 108,000 km², nearly two percent of Canada's marine area.

Tuvaijuittuq Marine Protected Area is 319,411 km², over five percent of Canada's marine area.

LOCATION:

Qikiqtani Region of Nunavut in the High Arctic, adjacent to the communities of Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Grise Fiord, Pond Inlet, and Resolute Bay.

TALLURUTIUP IMANGA NATIONAL MARINE CONSERVATION AREA



Protecting Gayini Nimmie-Caira

NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA



Andrew Peacock, Tandem Stills & Motion
The Nature Conservancy

By Rene Woods with an interview of Ian Woods

Rene Woods is a Nari Nari tribal member from southwest New South Wales with a long involvement in securing rights to water for Aboriginal people, including as Chair of Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations. He is working at The Nature Conservancy Australia as a project manager in Gayini Nimmie-Caira in southern New South Wales. He grew up on the Murrumbidgee where the river was always central to his family, his community, and their way of life. Rene is working towards a healthy sustainable basin for all communities.

Ian Woods is chairperson of the Nari Nari Tribal Council with over 25 years' experience with team leadership and project management. In the past 16 years, he has been actively involved at Toogimbie Indigenous Protected Area with cultural heritage identification and management, biodiversity and environmental monitoring, wetland restoration and revegetation, bushfire planning and management, and general farm maintenance on the Nari Nari Tribal Council properties.

Gayini Nimmie-Caira is a vast open floodplain in the Lowbidgee area of southern New South Wales, Australia, covering 86,000 hectares (212,500 acres), making it the largest remaining wetland area in the Murrumbidgee River Basin. The Murrumbidgee is the second longest river in

Australia and a tributary to the country's largest and most important river, the Murray River.

The area's history is pastoral—until 2013 the region was covered by family-owned farms producing crops and ranches grazed by cattle

and sheep. The most recent land use was organic cropping, but the most significant development to the Gayini Nimmie-Caira story occurred in 2013 when the Australian and New South Wales Governments invested \$180 million (Australian dollars) to purchase and consolidate 11 landholdings, with a view to protecting and rehabilitating the area. The properties' water licenses were surrendered as part of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan's water-saving scheme and upwards of 40,000 hectares (nearly 100,000 acres) of land were designated to conservation outcomes because of their high importance to not just the Murray-Darling Basin, but also to the planet.

Gayini (meaning water in the Nari Nari language) is the new name for the area. It is home to permanent, environmentally significant water sources, which are breeding areas for native birds, fish, and amphibians and provide habitat

for other animals. Bush tucker and medicine plants thrive and will be protected in perpetuity.

As part of a competitive tender process—whereby the New South Wales Government called for proposals from public and private entities to assume management of Gayini Nimmie-Caira—the government granted management of the area to a consortium made up of the Nari Nari Tribal Council (NNTC), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group, and the University of New South Wales.

In December of 2019, the New South Wales Government sold the properties to The Nature Conservancy on behalf of the Nari Nari who are taking over ownership and management. The New South Wales Government is using proceeds from the sale to establish a stewardship fund for Nari Nari to manage the land in perpetuity.



“My best advice to any group with big dreams, but especially to First Nation organisations, is to surround yourself with expertise,” NNTC chair Ian Woods believes.

“You need to be open to devoting the time needed to create partnerships. This takes time and connection with those who have the skills to reach your goals.”

“It takes a good support base.”

NNTC already successfully manages a much smaller, neighbouring Indigenous Protected Area but the challenge of protecting Gayini Nimmie-Caira, such an internationally important landscape, was not to be passed up.

Some roadblocks presented themselves; there were delays in the government-led tendering process; the heavy plant and equipment needed to restore the area was difficult to afford; and neighbour relations were testy and tense, but Mr. Woods agrees the project is now gaining momentum into positive outcomes.

“The ongoing drought is an issue for everyone and is making it difficult for the land to naturally recover as quickly as we would like,” Mr. Woods said.

“The community can now see what we are striving to achieve and are getting on board, and the management contract has meant we can invest in our own equipment and train our people to operate them.”

Self-sufficiency and self-determination are driving forces behind this project. NNTC members unashamedly aim to one day employ all First Nation staff and set up a training organisation, tourism operation, and contracting businesses.

“We want to grow our own expertise,” Mr. Woods said.

“We want our people in charge and offering mainstream training to everyone; training that has First Nation/cultural issues and the environment at the centre of all our projects and our teachings.”

“We can be leaders in actively demonstrating how First Nation people have been the best custodians of this land.”

Given the humble beginnings of NNTC as a small group initially set up to do some small short-term environmental projects, to where the organisation now sits at the cusp of national recognition, it seems the wide Riverina skies are the limits.

“We can be leaders in actively demonstrating how First Nation people have been the best custodians of this land.”



Peter Stephen



Andrew Peacock, Tandem Skills & Motion
The Nature Conservancy

KEY FACTS

Gayini Nimmie-Caira

THE NAMES:

Gayini, which means water in the Nari Nari language, is what the Nari Nari people call the landscape.

COMMUNITY:

The Nari Nari are an Indigenous Australian group in the Riverina region of New South Wales, Australia.

WYSS FOUNDATION INVOLVEMENT:

The Wyss Foundation provided a \$4 million grant to The Nature Conservancy in December 2019 to purchase the Gayini Nimmie-Caira Property from the New South Wales Government, as well as to purchase the adjacent privately owned 40,000-hectare (84,000-acre) Great Cumbung Swamp property. Upon closing on the Gayini Nimmie-Caira property, The Nature Conservancy immediately transferred the property to the Nari Nari for permanent conservation management. The \$2.4 million in Wyss funding for the Gayini Nimmie-Caira acquisition (as well as the other funding needed to close the deal) that was received by the New South Wales Government for the property was placed into a stewardship endowment to help fund the Nari Nari's management of the property moving forward.

SIZE:

86,000 hectares (212,500 acres).

LOCATION:

Lowbidgee area of southern New South Wales, Australia.

WILDLIFE:

Blue-billed duck, freckled duck, the endangered Australian painted snipe, the Australasian bittern, and the critically endangered plains-wanderer.



GAYINI NIMMIE-CAIRA

Toni Moran

Northern Rangelands Trust

KENYA



Ami Vitale

**By Tom Lalampaa,
Chief Executive Officer, Northern Rangelands Trust**

Tom Lalampaa is Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Rangelands Trust, an organization that supports 39 community conservancies in northern and coastal Kenya committed to supporting communities, protecting lands and waters, and developing resilient economies. Tom is a Samburu from the West Gate Community Conservancy, a well-established conservancy of the Northern Rangelands Trust. For over a decade, Tom has worked to design, develop, and expand community conservancies across northern Kenya.

The rangelands of northern Kenya are landscapes characterised by vast open grasslands where there has always been a lot of movement, of people, of livestock, of wildlife, all interacting together on a day-to-day basis.

That movement has been central to helping both pastoralists and wildlife cushion themselves from a lack of rain, and therefore to survive. This is an arid area, and when there is no water, people and animals move to find it.

These sorts of natural landscapes and natural engagements with them are essential for

vibrant communities and economies, and for helping to build climate resilience, preserve pastoralist heritage, and foster a local sense of place. All of that brings the communities together.

But today these rangelands have been very heavily degraded because of a lack of good governance and good grazing practices.

We used to hear from our great-grandfathers that the different people who lived in these landscapes all had very strong traditions on managing their natural resources in the past.

The elders drew up bylaws, directed where people might settle for a while, where they might move their livestock, what water they could use, what trees could be used and what should be left alone. There were these rules traditionally respected by the elders.

The reality is that things have changed. With new cultures, with new interactions, with each other, we have seen a gradual weakening of those historical traditional natural resource governance systems.

So now we are facing the very serious depletion of our natural resources, purely as a result of many years of poor management practices. Resources have been heavily over-extracted —water, grass, even sand from riverbeds for construction in the cities. There has been conflict between people. There has been poaching of wild species.

This puts us in a place now where there are a lot of challenges, and they are made even worse by

the changing climate. We have to reverse these trends.

The Northern Rangelands Trust was formed out of a need for an umbrella support organisation to anchor and provide oversight to a growing number of community conservancies in northern Kenya.

We are helping those communities to reinforce those traditional mechanisms that were there before to manage natural resources, structures like elders' grazing committees that decide where and when livestock can graze.

We are working to support community decision-making. Already there has been some very great success around managing degradation, raising plants, planning settlements, controlling invasive plant species that have colonised the area due to degradation, and managing conflict related to natural resources.



Ami Vitale

We've learned important lessons. One: start small, then scale up. Two: conservation is a long-term investment. Don't come and build a classroom and leave. Don't expect a major outcome immediately.

Three: everything is connected. Issues of lack of water are linked to climate change, which is connected to issues of overgrazing, which affects wildlife conservation, which is connected to security, which is connected to lack of governance.

If you come with a single-minded approach, if you say I'm only here to help elephant protection and stop the illegal wildlife trade, then you won't win people over and your outcomes will be very minimal.

What you need to do is take a multi-sector approach where you are touching people's lives and in the process you build the incentives for wider conservation impacts. So you help secure

water for communities. You improve peace and security. You bring health facilities and vocational training for the youth.

You change the narrative: there was the idea that conservation was exclusive, it excludes the community. But in our case there is the idea that it is the communities who own these resources, all of them.

We continue to witness, for example, the recovery of very endangered species like the hirola antelope, the Grevy's zebra. That is purely because of improved governance and the communities themselves out there keeping an eye on these resources of theirs.

The opportunity of conserving wildlife and benefiting the indigenous communities of northern Kenya exists now. We have secured 42,000 km² to date. We can go to 100,000 km², if we wish, if we take bold action and make transformational investments before the doors close.

“What you need to do is take a multi-sector approach where you are touching people's lives and in the process you build the incentives for wider conservation impacts.”



KEY FACTS

Kenya's Northern Rangelands

THE NAMES:

Rangelands are significant swaths usually of grass-covered savanna or semi-arid grazing areas shared by domestic livestock and wild animals. Nomads and their cattle and camels have lived together in this landscape in northern Kenya for centuries.

SIZE:

Approximately 179,300 hectares (443,000 acres) supported by the Wyss Foundation. In total, the conservancies Northern Rangelands Trust supports cover 42,000 km², which is seven percent of Kenya's land area, and a little under twice the size of New Jersey.

COMMUNITY:

In the areas the Wyss Foundation supports are Laikipia Maasai, Samburu, and Turkana. Together, 18 different communities live in conservancies Northern Rangelands Trust supports.

WYSS FOUNDATION INVOLVEMENT:

For the past two years, the Wyss Foundation has provided operational support grants to The Nature Conservancy's Africa Program-Kenya, of which approximately \$1.6 million per year is provided to the Northern Rangelands Trust to support their work with local communities.

WILDLIFE:

Elephant, giraffe, Grevy's zebra, lion, and many more species of birds and antelopes.

LOCATION:

The conservation areas the Wyss Foundation supports are on the northern Laikipia plateau, roughly 300 km north of the capital, Nairobi. In total, the Northern Rangelands Trust supports 39 different conservation areas, all owned and managed by their local communities. Most are in north-central Kenya, stretching from the Ngare Ndare forest 200 km north of Nairobi to Shurr, as far as 650 km north of the capital close to Kenya's border with Ethiopia. There are also conservancies in Kenya's far west on its border with Uganda, and its east, on its Indian Ocean coastline.

NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST



Badger-Two Medicine

**BLACKFEET TRADITIONAL TERRITORY,
MONTANA, UNITED STATES**



Tony Bynum
Rebecca Drobis | Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance

By Kendall Edmo

Kendall Edmo is a member of the Blackfeet Nation who has worked with the Blackfeet Tribal Historic Preservation Office. She was born and raised on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in northwest Montana—just east of Glacier National Park and the Badger-Two Medicine, and just south of the Canadian border.

The modern Blackfeet Reservation covers about 1.5 million acres, but our ancestral homelands stretch well into Canada and as far south as the Yellowstone River. Through a series of treaties and agreements with the U.S. federal government, the Blackfeet people's ancestral homelands were vastly diminished during the 1800's. In the 1895 Agreement with the U.S. government, the Blackfeet lost possession of the entire western border of our reservation—what is now Glacier National Park and the Badger-Two Medicine area. The Blackfeet people still retain treaty rights in the Badger-Two Medicine, which is managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

Before I was born, tribal members, conservation organizations, and local non-tribal residents joined forces to fight industrial development

in the Badger-Two Medicine. In 1982, the U.S. government leased the entire Badger-Two Medicine area to oilmen for \$1 an acre, without proper environmental review and without consulting the Blackfeet Nation. Our people partnered with conservation and hunter/angler organizations to oppose those leases, and we won many legal battles over several decades. In 2006, Congress passed a bill prohibiting any future leasing in our Badger-Two Medicine. Later, the U.S. Forest Service placed the entire Badger-Two Medicine off-limits to motorized use. And with our conservation allies, Blackfeet negotiated the voluntary retirement of nearly every lease in this culturally significant area.

Now, only a single uncooperative company persists. I became involved in our fight to

protect the Badger-Two Medicine about five years ago. My background is in environmental studies, and after I graduated college, I always knew I would return home and figure out a way to help protect my people's homelands. I started building relationships with people in my community and began to realize how important the Badger-Two Medicine is to the Blackfeet people ecologically, culturally, and spiritually.

“As long as our homeland is threatened, I will stand alongside my Blackfeet Nation and conservation friends, working together for the ecological and spiritual integrity of our home, and on behalf of the generations yet to come.”

Tribal members still use the area to hunt and gather, hold ceremony, and pray. Our connection to the area goes back millennia and will continue for millennia.

For the past four years I've been working with the Blackfeet Tribal Historic Preservation Office, which has given me the opportunity to gain knowledge about traditional Blackfeet culture. Under the guidance of the Blackfeet Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, I am trained to survey, identify and document Blackfeet historical and cultural sites. I've listened to traditional Blackfeet stories and gained a deeper connection to the cultural landscape. I have learned that for conservation efforts to be truly successful, they must empower and uplift communities that are indigenous to that landscape. Traditional conservation practices must evolve and Native voices and perspectives must be heard and considered.

We have been fortunate to have partnerships with conservation groups that genuinely value Indigenous perspectives and empower our community. And together we have been successful in keeping the Badger-Two Medicine free from any oil and gas wells. The last leaseholder continues to battle in the courts, and our cultural homeland is not yet permanently protected. As long as our homeland is threatened, I will stand alongside the Blackfeet Nation and conservation friends, working together for the ecological and cultural integrity of our home, and on behalf of the generations yet to come.



Rebecca Drobis



Peter Metcalf
Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance



Tony Bynum
Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance

KEY FACTS

Badger-Two Medicine

THE NAMES:

Named after Badger Creek and the Two Medicine River, which spill from the mountains, the Badger-Two Medicine holds deep spiritual significance for the Blackfeet Nation. Blackfeet origin stories are set within this incredibly beautiful landscape.

COMMUNITY:

The Blackfeet Indian Reservation, located in northwest Montana, is home to more than 17,000 members of the Blackfeet Nation. Established by treaty in 1855, their land base was reduced in subsequent years without tribal consent thus dispossessing the Blackfeet Nation of portions of their traditional homeland.

WYSS FOUNDATION INVOLVEMENT:

Since the Badger-Two Medicine and the Rocky Mountain Front were permanently withdrawn from future mineral leasing in 2006, the Wyss Foundation has provided over \$3.5 million to support the purchase or donation and permanent retirement of more than 140,000 acres (56,600 hectares) of existing oil and gas leases in the area, including approximately 135,000 acres (54,600 hectares) within the Badger-Two Medicine.

WILDLIFE:

Grizzly bear, elk, wolverines, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, lynx, wolves, and badgers.

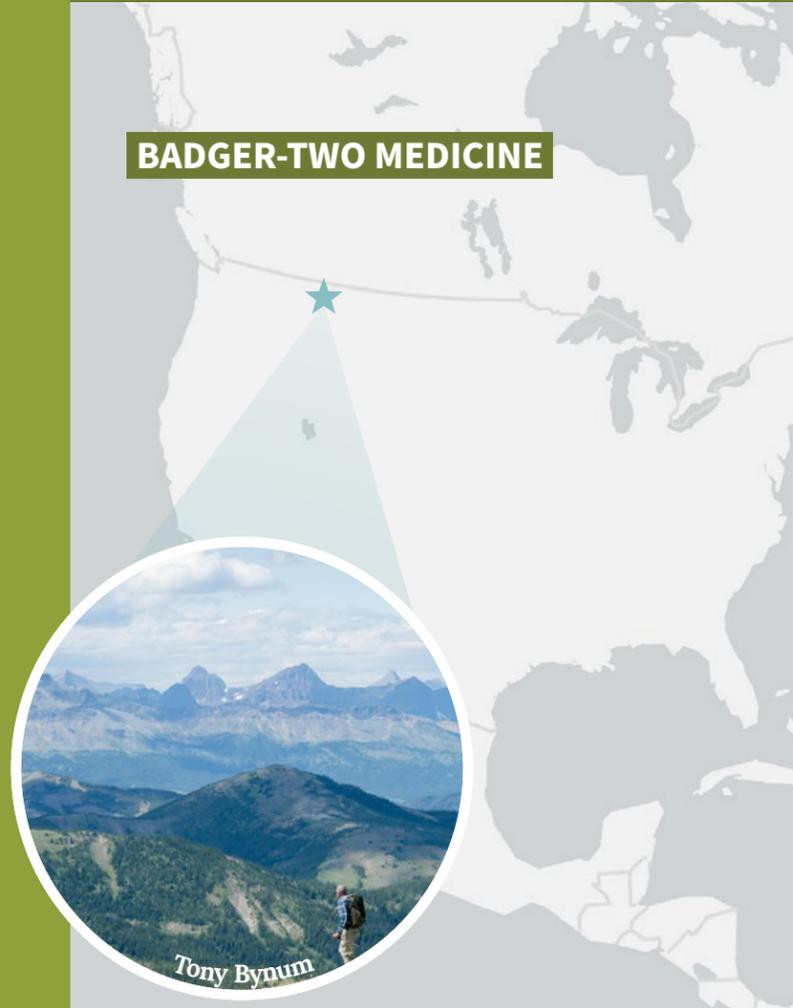
SIZE:

165,588-acre (67,000-hectare) Traditional Cultural District.

LOCATION:

The Badger-Two Medicine is surrounded by the Blackfeet Indian Reservation to the north and east, Glacier National Park to the north and west, and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex to the south.

BADGER-TWO MEDICINE



Tony Bynum



