

WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER 2004 DOCKET

The Western Environmental Law Center is a non-profit, public interest law firm dedicated to protecting the West's forests, wildlife, water, and communities. This docket provides a summary of the critical legal services we are providing on behalf of over one hundred grassroots groups, Indian tribes, and individual activists. Please visit www.westernlaw.org for more information.

Wildlife

STATE & Lawyers	CLIENTS/CAMPAIGNS	ACTION
NM, CO <i>Bishop</i>	Sinapu, Center for Native Ecosystems, Animal Protection Institute, Animal Protection of New Mexico, Forest Guardians, Carson Forest Watch	Actions to protect the Canada lynx in the Southern Rocky Mountains from trapping, hunting, and predator control activities.
NM <i>Bishop</i>	Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Biological Diversity	Lawsuit defending the reintroduction of the Mexican wolf to the Gila Wilderness.
CO <i>Atwood</i>	American Lands Alliance, Biodiversity Legal Foundation, The Larch Company, Center for Native Ecosystems, Sinapu	Endangered Species Act suits against Fish and Wildlife Service for failure to protect the Gunnison sage grouse.
CO nationwide <i>Brown</i>	AGRO (a coalition of 14 environmental groups)	Lawsuit to compel government agencies to consider the impacts and efficacy of aerial gunning as a form of predator control on public lands across the nation and in western Colorado.
MT, WY <i>Bahr Schlenker- Goodrich</i>	American Lands Alliance, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance, George Wuerthner	Lawsuit filed against Bureau of Land Management proposal to develop over 57,000 new coalbed methane wells in the Powder River Basin. Proposal threatens to destroy habitat crucial to survival of sage grouse and black-tailed prairie dogs.
OR <i>Fink, Frost</i>	Hells Canyon Preservation Council, Oregon Natural Resources Council Fund	Strategic lawsuits forcing the Forest Service to protect the threatened lynx and the forests that provide lynx habitat.
OR, WA <i>Atwood</i>	Coalition of 12 environmental groups	Lawsuit to force the Fish & Wildlife Service to list 4 imperiled species of Lamprey under the Endangered Species Act.
ID, MT, WA <i>Fink, Atwood</i>	Alliance for the Wild Rockies, The Lands Council, Defenders of Wildlife, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance	Two lawsuits to protect isolated and threatened populations of grizzly bears in the North Cascades Ecosystem, Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk Ecosystems

Indian Tribes and Cultural Resources

STATE & Lawyers	CLIENTS/CAMPAIGNS	ACTION
MT <i>Atwood Tebbutt</i>	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Indian trust doctrine suit to ensure proper reclamation of lands damaged by past cyanide heap-leach mining, and to assist the Tribes in securing the long-term protection of cultural lands.
MT <i>Rodgers</i>	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Citizen suit against mine owner and Bureau of Land Management for extensive water pollution caused by defunct Zortman-Landusky gold mine.
NM <i>Herskovits</i>	Picuris Pueblo	Assisting Pueblo in developing aboriginal land claim to reclaim and prevent destruction of sacred sites that are affected by open-pit mica mine.
WA <i>Rodgers</i>	Snoqualmie Indian Tribe	Assisting Tribe in preserving water quality and spiritual and cultural heritage of the 268 ft tall Snoqualmie Falls. The Falls rise 86 feet higher than Niagara Falls and are threatened with expanded hydroelectric development

Forests and Public Lands

STATE & Lawyers	CLIENTS/CAMPAIGNS	ACTION
AZ <i>Bishop</i>	Arizona Wildlife Federation	Suit and on-going enforcement of settlement agreement to force Forest Service to reduce grazing to protect the pronghorn antelope and unique wetlands and marshes on the Anderson Mesa in the Coconino National Forest.
OR <i>Fink Rodgers</i>	Siskiyou Regional Education Project, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Oregon Natural Resources Council Fund, Sierra Club, American Lands Alliance, The Wilderness Society, Pacific Rivers Council and Defenders of Wildlife	Assisting organizations in administrative and legal actions to prevent damaging post-fire logging in the wake of southern Oregon's Biscuit Fire.
National <i>Fink</i>	American Lands Alliance, Cascadia Wildlands Project, Citizens for Better Forestry, The Ecology Center, Friends of the Clearwater, Gifford Pinchot Task Force, Headwaters, Idaho Sporting Congress, Kettle Range Conservation Group, Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center, The Lands Council, et al.,	Lawsuits challenging both the Clinton and Bush regulations that govern management of the 155 national forests covering 192 million acres of Forest Service system lands across the country to ensure that the regulations will not jeopardize endangered species that live in the forests.

CA, OR, WA <i>Frost</i>	American Lands Alliance, Gifford Pinchot Task Force, Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Northcoast Environmental Center, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, Oregon Natural Resources Council Action, Oregon Natural Resources Council Fund, Siskiyou Regional Education Project, Umpqua Watersheds, Environmental Protection Information Center, Klamath Forest Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Bark, and Cascadia Wildlands Project	Two lawsuits seeking to protect the remaining old growth forests of the Pacific Northwest, by ensuring that the Forest Service survey for certain rare and uncommon species, and to protect them, in any forests proposed for logging.
CA <i>Frost</i>	Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, High Sierra Hikers, Wilderness Watch	Lawsuit to compel the Forest Service to protect the values of the John Muir and Ansel Adams Wilderness Areas in the Sierra Nevada's "Range of Light," by curbing excessive commercial packstock use that harms wilderness trails, lakes, and meadows.
OR <i>Bahr</i>	Siskiyou Regional Education Project, Wilderness Watch	Suits to overturn Forest Service permit granting motorized access to mining claims within the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area.
NM <i>Schlenker-Goodrich</i>	Chihuahuan Grasslands Alliance, New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, Sky Island Alliance	Suit protecting pristine grasslands area with significant wilderness value from destructive oil and gas development.
NM <i>Schlenker-Goodrich</i>	Coalition for the Valle Vidal	Assisting clients administratively to prevent coalbed methane ("CBM") development within the Valle Vidal Unit of the Carson National Forest, on occasion referred to as the "Yellowstone" of New Mexico.
CA <i>Schlenker-Goodrich</i>	Environmental Protection Information Center	Challenge to a timber sale of late-successional and old-growth forest adjacent to the Yolla Bolla Wilderness in the headwaters of the Thomas Creek, an "eligible" river under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
Western States <i>Fink, Bahr</i>	Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics	Lawsuits challenging the Forest Service's use of chemical fire retardant in fighting wildfires on national forests.
ID <i>Atwood</i>	Friends of the Clearwater, Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Idaho Sporting Congress, and The Ecology Center	Lawsuit to force the Nez Perce NF to allow public participation in revision of its forest-wide old growth strategy and prevent logging within old growth habitat until the amendment is finalized.
WY <i>Schlenker-Goodrich</i>	Biodiversity Conservation Alliance, Wyoming Wilderness Alliance, Sierra Club, Wyoming Chapter	Suit challenging an intensive energy development project affecting 279 square miles of the fragile, wilderness-like Red Desert.

Western Watersheds

STATE & Lawyers	CLIENTS/CAMPAIGNS	ACTION
AZ <i>Bishop</i>	American Rivers, Friends of Arizona's Rivers, Arizona Wildlife Federation, Central Arizona Paddlers Club, Maricopa Audubon Society, Sierra Club	Wild and Scenic River Act lawsuit forced Forest Service to prepare management plan for Verde River. We are now reviewing the plan.

AZ, CO, NM <i>Bishop Schlenker-Goodrich</i>	Center for Biological Diversity, Central Arizona Paddlers Club, Colorado Rivers Alliance, Taxpayers for the Animas, Amigos Bravos	Lawsuits to compel agencies to identify and protect rivers eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
CA <i>Frost</i>	Center for Biological Diversity, Environmental Protection Information Center, Coyote Downey, a Keneste or Wailaki tribe elder.	Lawsuit seeking to restore steelhead trout in the North Fork Eel Wild and Scenic River by curbing excessive livestock grazing along the river and its tributaries.
ID, NM, WA <i>Tebbutt Brown Rodgers</i>	Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) Clean-up Initiative	Series of Clean Water Act suits against commercial dairies, chicken farms, feedlots, and other industrial agricultural operations for illegal discharges of animal waste and other pollutants into public waterways.
NM <i>Bishop</i>	Amigos Bravos	Assisting clients with strategies to protect the Red River and monitoring mining company's compliance with permit that regulates discharges from waste rock dumps to the Red River.
OR <i>Frost</i>	Siskiyou Regional Education Project	Lawsuit seeking to restore wild salmon in the Siskiyou National Forest by forcing the Forest Service to require plans of operation for instream mining operations, and to consider the impacts of any mining before it is allowed.
OR <i>Frost</i>	Riverhawks, American Rivers, Northwest Rafter, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Wilderness Watch	Lawsuit seeking to restore the "wild" section of the Rogue Wild and Scenic River by curbing excessive motorboat uses that harm river-dependent wildlife species.
CA <i>Rodgers Herskovits</i>	Environmental Protection Information Center, Friends of the Van Duzen	Lawsuit to protect the Van Duzen Wild and Scenic River Watershed and marbled murrelet, coho salmon, and steelhead habitat from aggressive logging.
CA <i>Herskovits Brown</i>	Mountain Resources Conservancy, San Geronimo Chapter, Sierra Club	Developing a comprehensive campaign to prevent illegal groundwater extraction which has, in combination with severe drought, caused greater than 50% mortality in the forests of the rare sky islands of southern California's San Jacinto Mountains.
NM <i>Bishop Schlenker-Goodrich</i>	Amigos Bravos	Administrative process to define strong water quality standards for New Mexico.
OR <i>Frost</i>	Hells Canyon Preservation Council	Participation in a mining industry lawsuit that seeks to weaken the Forest Service mining regulations which we had achieved in a previous suit.
WA <i>Rodgers Bahr</i>	Okanagan Highlands Alliance, Washington Public Interest Research Group and The Lands Council	Challenge to re-issuance of discharge permit for lead and zinc mining operations which may impact water quality and bull trout habitat.
OR <i>Tebbutt</i>	Northwest Environmental Defense Center, Oregon Natural Resources Council, Headwaters, Columbia Riverkeeper, and Oregon Toxics Alliance	Suit to strengthen Oregon's Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) waste discharge permit rules into one of the most comprehensive in the nation.
CA <i>Tebbutt</i>	Northern California River Watch	Suit protecting Russian River and adjacent wetlands from unpermitted discharges by a city sewage treatment plant.

WY, MT <i>Herskovits Schlenker- Goodrich</i>	Powder River Basin Resource Council	Develop litigation strategy to combat groundwater depletion due to coal bed methane development.
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Toxics and Pollutants

STATE & <i>Lawyers</i>	CLIENTS/CAMPAIGNS	ACTION
National <i>Bahr Tebbutt</i>	Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides	Lawsuits filed to compel the Environmental Protection Agency to require manufacturers to list all inert pesticide ingredients on product labels to protect public health and the environment.
National <i>Tebbutt</i>	Family Farm Defenders, Oregon Toxics Alliance, Safe Food and Fertilizer	Lawsuit challenging EPA rule that allows hazardous wastes to be "recycled" into fertilizers.
ID <i>Tebbutt</i>	Saint John's Organic Farm, Peter Dill	Suit regarding Gem County Mosquito Abatement District's attempts to control mosquitoes through aerial and ground applications of toxic pesticides.

Western Communities

STATE & <i>Lawyers</i>	CLIENTS/CAMPAIGNS	ACTION
NM <i>Herskovits</i>	Rio Arriba County Board of County Commissioners	Successful defense of Rio Arriba County in action challenging county's restrictive logging regulations. Tenth Circuit decision upholds county's right to impose strict land use regulations to protect vital local resources.
NM <i>Herskovits, Brown</i>	Mora Valley Acequia Association	Development of case to protect water supply of traditional agrarian communities from improper excessive upstream diversions.
NM <i>Herskovits, Brown Schlenker- Goodrich</i>	Oil and Gas Accountability Project	Draft and develop model oil & gas ordinance for New Mexico counties.
NV <i>Herskovits Brown</i>	Mineral County, Walker Lake Working Group	Representing rural Nevada county and group of local citizens fighting to save Walker Lake, one of 11 terminal desert lakes in the world, from complete collapse due to upstream diversions and drought. We seek to ensure adequate water levels in the lake to protect the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout fishery, the recreation and tourism-dependent local economy, and the larger ecosystem which relies on the lake for survival.