



# Public Lands Foundation

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



PHOTO: J. Merrill/BLM Utah

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### STAFF

**Courtney Lyons-Garcia**,  
*Executive Director*

### Front Cover:

De-Na-Zin Wilderness, BLM New Mexico  
Photo by Sherman Hogue

### Back Cover:

Poison Spider Mesa/Colorado River, BLM Utah  
Photo by Kathy Merrill

# President's Message



Dear Friends,

The year 2020 is one we will all remember. The Pandemic set us all on our heels for a while, but as the year progressed the PLF performed admirably to adapt to the times and fulfill our mission. The most significant adaptation was the virtual annual meeting we held via Zoom in September. Although we all missed the camaraderie of meeting in person, we had a very successful meeting due to the hard work of George Stone, Beau McClure, Bill LeBarron and all the folks who contributed to making the change from in-person to virtual work. The BLM-gained "can do" attitude we picked up during our careers paid off in adjusting to the challenges of 2020.

Thanks to the hard work of several members, our partners, and volunteers we were able to comment on rulemakings and legislation, and advocate for the BLM on several programs, such as wild horses and burros, wildland fire issues, NEPA rulemakings, use of e-bikes on public lands, and other issues.

The election of 2020 played a large role in the PLF work plan for 2020. Since the PLF needs to be prepared to welcome new leaders and present our positions at the right time, last spring the Board began drafting transition guidance. For many of you, the transition in Presidential administration brings back many career memories. Van Manning led a team in soliciting input and developing a focused list of transition priorities. Following the September Board meeting, a PLF Transition Team was formed to build on those priorities and to provide outreach to the DOI Transition Review Team. This team was chaired by Mat Millenbach and included Henri Bisson, Ray Brady, Tom Allen, Don Simpson, Jim Caswell, George Stone, Eric Janes, and me. We drafted a short paper that we could share with the Department regardless of the results of the November election. After the November election we finalized the paper. Once the DOI Transition Review team members were announced we reached out and offered PLF's paper to the team. Our intent was not to inundate them with a lot of paper, but to give them some advice as they transition into leadership roles in the Department and BLM.

Another exciting accomplishment of the past year was moving forward with the hiring of an Executive Director. The Board decided a few years ago that for PLF to be successful in growing our capacity to advocate for the public lands, we needed the help of a professional. Bob Moore chaired a committee to seek candidates for the job. We recently hired Courtney Lyons-Garcia as our Executive Director. Courtney has more than 20 years of nonprofit public lands experience and we are happy to have her onboard.

The PLF presented several awards and two scholarships during the year. One special award was presented to charter member Glen Collins for his thirty-three years of service to the PLF as a Board member and manager of the PLF archives at the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix. Glen stepped down from the Board in 2020 and in recognition of his distinguished service the Board unanimously voted to name the archives the Glendon E. Collins National Archives.

As a volunteer organization we cannot be successful without the work of our officers, board, volunteers, members, and partners. We could not do this without your many hours of service and your financial contributions. Thank you all for your dedication to the public lands.

Sincerely,  
Ed Shepard



PHOTO: Bob Wick

## 2020: Rising to the Challenge

What a year this has been! The COVID pandemic challenged and changed us all. It also greatly increased the public's use of and appreciation for our public lands, especially lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. That together with the PLF's pause in engagement with BLM Headquarters made this year especially difficult. Face to

face communication vanished, but by the end of the year everyone had become an expert in Zoom sessions. The BLM reorganization and dismantling of the Washington Office were all in full swing during 2020. Despite these many difficult issues, PLF pressed on with its Advocacy and Program work in support of BLM's mission.

## Advocacy

### TESTIMONY ON BLM FY 2021 BUDGET PRIORITIES

PLF Vice- President Don Simpson testified on the BLM Fiscal Year 2021 budget priorities before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. Testimony included PLF recommendations on wildlife migration corridors, sage grouse habitat, outdoor recreation, and restricting funding for directed transfers of BLM Washington DC headquarters employees to 11 different western states.

### E-BIKE REGULATIONS

PLF commented on the BLM's proposed rule to amend the Off-Road Vehicle regulations to allow class 1 e-bikes (pedal-assisted bikes with no throttle) to be defined as non-motorized bicycles for land use planning and travel management purposes. PLF supported the proposal which is now in effect.

### GRAZING REGULATIONS

PLF provided scoping comments on BLM's proposed grazing regulation Environmental Impact Statement. PLF also collaborated with 16 other like-minded organizations with comments regarding the BLM's proposed revisions to grazing regulations. These comments supported moving the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health within the regulations so as to center them as foundational and to ensure their applicability to other areas of BLM administration such as fire fuel management, recreation and energy development.

### STIMULUS FUNDING FOR WILDFIRE RECOVERY

PLF collaborated with the National Association of Forest Service Retirees in writing House and Senate Leadership in support of additional stimulus funds to address the impacts of COVID-19 particularly among communities

recovering from record breaking 2020 wildfires and to support investments in land management agencies to prevent further disastrous wildfires.

### PROPOSED CHANGES TO NEPA PROCEDURES

PLF together with the National Association of Forest Service Retirees submitted extensive comments on the Council of Environmental Quality's proposed update to the regulations implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act.

### TRANSITION ADVICE

PLF published one Position Statement in 2020 through which it communicated transition advice to the Interior Transition Team for the incoming 2021 Administration. Included in the Position Statement was a recommendation to establish the BLM Foundation as authorized in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017, but never acted upon by the last Administration.

### BLM HEADQUARTERS

PLF posted a statement on November 17, 2020 supporting the return of the BLM Headquarters to Washington, DC. The BLM needs a strong leadership presence in Washington, D.C. where it can support the Administration's priorities by collaborating with sister agencies, the Interior Secretary's office, and the Congress. In addition, a strong cadre of senior BLM staff is needed to support the BLM leadership. The recent move of the BLM's Headquarters Office to Grand Junction, Colorado and dispersal of many other positions to numerous western cities has resulted in many senior staff leaving the BLM, creating a shortage of expertise. The many positions still vacant, whether in Grand Junction or in other western state locations, should be reviewed for potential return to Washington, D.C. while still vacant.



PHOTO: Devon Balet Media

# Programs

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Public Lands Foundation was held September 14-16, 2020, and was an abbreviated virtual meeting. The general meeting focused on wildlife migration corridors and sage grouse with guest presentations by the Acting BLM Wyoming State Director, the Deputy Director of the Wyoming Fish and Game Department, and the Director of the Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resources Trust. Jamela Thompson, a 2020 George Lea Founder's Scholarship recipient also presented a paper entitled Characterizing Fuel Treatment Effectiveness in Utah. The meeting was also available through our YouTube channel. A virtual meeting of the Board of Directors occurred in tandem with the Annual Meeting.



## PARTNERSHIP OUTREACH

Partnership Outreach included several PLF Officers and Board members representing the organization at virtual and in-person meetings.

- The PLF President and Vice-President for Operations represented PLF in the February meeting of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees in Phoenix.
- The PLF President provided updates to the American Wildlife Conservation Partners, the National Horse and Burro Range Management Coalition (NHBRMC), and the Wyoming Outdoor Council.
- The PLF provided a policy statement to the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro National Advisory Board, and also participated in the NHBRMC steering committee meetings.
- Senator Michael Bennet's (Colorado) staff requested a conference call with two PLF Board members from Colorado. Bennet's staff from Washington D.C. and Durango, Colorado participated. Topics included the status of the BLM headquarters reorganization and dispersal, and the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Recovery Act.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Two George Lea Founder's Scholarships were awarded at \$ 5,000 each. Jamela Thompson, a Master's degree student at Utah State University in Ecology and Elizabeth Kowallis a senior forestry major at the University of Idaho were the 2020 recipients. Interest in the Founder's Scholarship was strong, with 30 students across 20 universities and colleges competing.

## STUDENT CONGRESS

Every two to three years PLF sponsors a national student congress dealing with public land management and natural resource issues. The goals of this program are:

- Educate our youth on the history and current issues related to public land management.
- Engage 20-25 students in providing input into the future management of these lands.
- Expand student knowledge of potential careers and enrich student experiences.



PHOTO: Kyle Sullivan/BLM Oregon

Planning for a 2022 Student Congress is underway, scheduled for Boise, Idaho with a focus on wildland fire. As with previous sessions, participants will be recruited nationally to obtain a diverse class. Significant student pre-work, team-building, policy and partnership exposure, and a community-based resource stewardship project will be offered to these future public lands opinion leaders and doers. Following the four day program, recommendations made by the students will be presented to the BLM Director and the Secretary of the Interior. One of the students will be selected to serve a two year term on the PLF Board of Directors.

## PLF MEMORIAL WALL

The PLF Memorial Wall is an on-going program on the PLF website. It is an extensive database honoring former BLM employees and PLF members with a photo and a brief note on their BLM employment. This Wall expresses PLF's sincere respect and appreciation for the lives of the men and women who labored hard for the responsible common use and enjoyment of sustainably managed public lands.



PHOTO: K. Kuester

# Awards

- Tom Warren was presented with the PLF Lifetime Service Award for excellence in public land management and his work in Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation.
- A. Ray Keller was presented with the PLF Lifetime Service Award for excellence in public land management. Ray's work on the Restore New Mexico program resulted in Lesser Prairie Chicken habitat restoration so that the species has not been listed as endangered.
- Jenna Whitlock was awarded The PLF Volunteer of the Year Award for her significant time and energy assisting the PLF in tracking the BLM reorganization and the many position vacancies that resulted.
- Montana's Ranchers Stewardship Alliance was awarded the PLF Landscape Stewardship award for their leadership in building a bridge between public and private land managers regarding each other's values, concerns and resources. This enabled more efficient and larger landscape level projects benefitting wildlife habitat and resource values.
- In recognition of Glen Collins' many years of service to our public lands, and to the PLF, the Board of Directors has voted to name the PLF's Archives at the Phoenix National Training Center "The Glendon E. Collins National Archives."



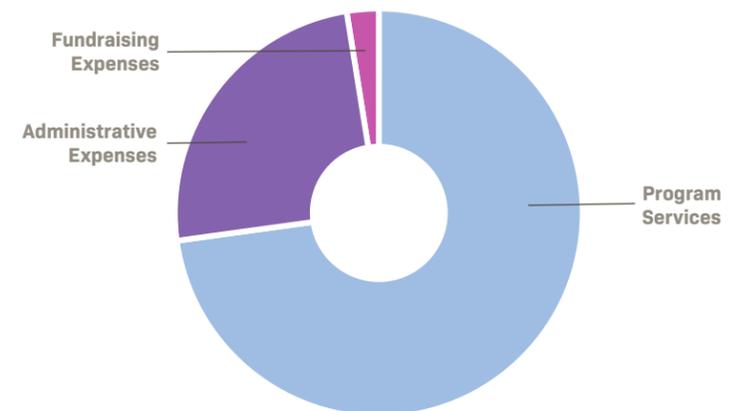
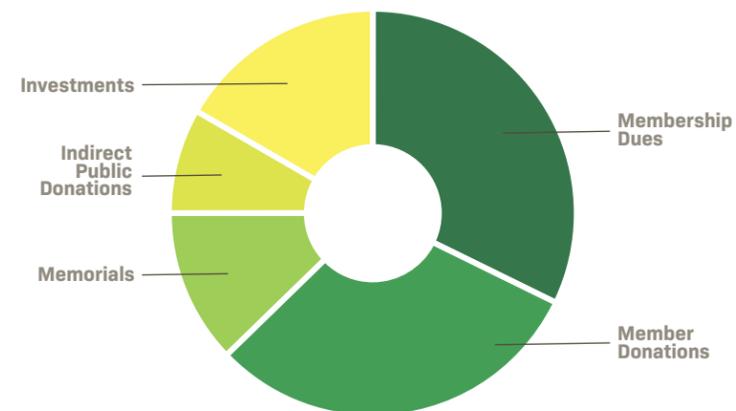
# Financials

The Public Lands Foundation is financially sound with total assets over \$365,000 as of the end of 2020. PLF relies primarily on individual donations and membership dues for income. PLF will work to increase Corporate and Foundation donations in the future. Legacy gifts, memorials and planned giving are also a significant current and future revenue source.

Since 2020 was not a typical year, income decreased and normal operating expenses remained the same. With no Annual Meeting it was not possible to hold our usual auction of donated items to support the PLF Scholarship Fund.

We are working with our newly hired Executive Director on ways to increase income from memberships and other revenue sources as our Student Congress and Annual Meeting continue to be impacted by COVID-19.

Dwight Hempel, PLF Treasurer



## REVENUES

Membership Dues	\$14,595
Member Donations	13,660
Memorials	5,590
Indirect Public Donations (Combined Federal Campaign and State Employee Charitable Campaign)	3,687
Investments	7,446
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$44,978</b>

## EXPENSES

Program Services	\$46,777
Administrative Expenses	15,854
Fundraising Expenses	1,503
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$64,134</b>

## ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Beginning Net Assets	\$374,257
Ending Net Assets	365,951
Total Liabilities	509
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$365,442</b>

# Thank You!

## APPRECIATION FOR PLF FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS:

### SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Sylvia Bruce,  
*in memory of Marion Collins*  
Jim Colby  
Ben Collins  
Carolyn Droscher  
Linda Hoffman,  
*in memory of Irving and Jeannie Senzel*  
*in memory of Bob Jones*  
Jeff Holdren  
David Kathman  
James Lambert  
Stephen Linder,  
*in memory of June Bailey*  
David Mari  
Gary Marsh  
Lois Mason,  
*in memory of Jean Austin*  
Maureen Merrell  
Christina Miller  
James Monroe  
Gregg and Mary Simmons  
John Stephenson  
David Stout,  
*in memory of Henry "Hank" Hansen*  
Al Wright,  
*in memory of Ed and Joyce Haste*

### STUDENT CONGRESS

David & Joyce Hunsaker  
*in memory of Jeff Long*  
*Student Congress Fund*  
John Kwiatkowski,  
*in memory of Hank Hammersmark and Ed Haste*  
Marv LeNoue  
John Stephenson

### GENERAL FUND \$100+

John Case  
Carolyn Droscher  
Nancy Haugh  
George Hirscherberger  
Eric Janes  
George Jones  
Edwin Katlas  
Guy Martin  
Jim May  
Gregg and Mary Simmons  
Brian Smith  
Ed Spang  
George Stone  
Charles Switzer  
Charles and Shoko Switzer  
Rena Tischer  
George Wilke

Nathaniel Wong  
Martin Zimmer

### MEMORIAL GIFTS

Robert Abbey  
*in memory of William Mortimer*  
Tom Allen  
*in memory of Ed Haste*  
Paul Applegate  
*in memory of Joanna Betenson, Bill Templeton & Bob Wilbur*  
Jan Bedrosian  
*in memory of Ed Haste*  
Henri Bisson  
*in memory of Ed & Joyce Haste, June Bailey*  
Sonya Cox  
*in memory of Ed Haste*  
Kathy Eaton  
*in memory of Jean Austin, Ed Haste & Chuck Wassinger*  
Zane Fulbright  
*in memory of June Bailey*  
Mike Gardner  
*in memory of Terry Nickerson*  
Mike Green  
*in memory of Odell Frandsen*  
Edward Grossman  
*in memory of Fiona Heckscher*  
Patricia Harvey  
*in memory of Ed Haste*

Dwight Hempel  
*in memory of Ed Haste & Frank Hissong*  
Gerald Hillier  
*in memory of Ed Haste & Lou Boll*  
Eric Janes  
*in memory of Tom Fry*  
David Jones  
*in memory of Ed Haste*  
Karl & Sharon Kipping  
*in memory of Harold Grayson & Billy Templeton*  
Mark Lawrence  
*in memory of Lou Bolles*  
Richard Manus  
*in memory of Billy Templeton*  
John Marks  
*in memory of Louis Bellesi & Harvey Grimm*  
Beau McClure  
*in memory of Marion Collins & Ed Haste*  
Matt Millenbach  
*in memory of Bill Luscher*

Steve and Deb Regele  
*in memory of June Bailey*  
Les Rosenkrance  
*in memory of Marion Collins, Odell Frandson, Tom Fry & Ed Haste*  
Tim Salt,  
*in memory of Louis Boll & Robert Rheiner, Jr.*  
Adam Sokoloski  
*in memory of Erick Kaarlela*  
Larry Woodard  
*in memory of Ed Haste & Jim Gabettas*  
Kim Young  
*in memory of John Freemuth*  
Martin Zimmer  
*in memory of Dave & Patti Brunner, Clair Whitlock*

### IN-KIND DONORS

Beau McClure  
George Stone

### APPRECIATION FOR PARTNERS

The PLF expresses its appreciation to partners whose collaboration and support during 2020 contributed significantly to our accomplishments. These include:  
American Wildlife Conservation Partners  
National Association of Forest Service Retirees  
National Horse and Burro Rangeland Management Coalition  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.



## You Can Help

The PLF also appreciates the support from many individuals who were not members of the PLF but who nonetheless took time to write Congress about the reorganization and the disruption that it created for the Bureau of Land Management and its employees and their families.

### How YOU can Help:

- Join the Public Lands Foundation and attend a PLF Annual meeting
- Get outside; be a BLM Volunteer
- Attend a BLM public meeting
- Attend a BLM Resource Advisory Committee meeting, or a BLM scoping session
- Comment on a BLM resource management plan or travel management plan
- Be a public lands influencer; alert the PLF to public land issues
- Follow the PLF on social media and publicland.org
- Make a gift to the PLF
- Select Public Lands Foundation as your charity when shopping with AmazonSmile, iGive and Kroger Community Rewards



PHOTO: Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse/BLM Florida

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about the PLF visit [www.publicland.org](http://www.publicland.org), follow us on social media, email us at [info@publicland.org](mailto:info@publicland.org), or contact us toll-free at 866-985-9636 or at 703-935-0916.



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