

ENDANGERED

# EARTH



CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY • WINTER 2025

# STANDING STRONG

A decade ago it was painfully clear that monarch butterflies were in serious trouble. The ranks of these once-common orange-and-black butterflies had declined by 90% in recent decades. Without action they'd be on a death spiral to extinction, and we'd be left heartbroken.

In 2014, after the lowest count ever, the Center and allies petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect monarchs under the Endangered Species Act. Since then, as one grim annual count followed another, we heaped pressure on the agency. If monarchs had any real shot at survival, they'd need the help that only the Act could provide.

Monarchs were put on the waiting list in 2020 and finally, after a decade of activism and prodding, were proposed for protection just a few weeks ago. It's a crucial step for these beleaguered butterflies and emblematic of our tenacious work to save life on Earth.

2024 was full of those kinds of wins, bringing new or proposed protections to 37 species, including dunes sagebrush lizards, white-tailed ptarmigans, Pearl River map turtles and Bethany Beach fireflies. We also secured nearly 6 million acres of protected habitat, with 1.6 million acres for rusty patched bumblebees, 1.4 million acres for Humboldt martens, and 1.5 million acres for Florida bonneted bats.

We successfully advocated for trade restrictions on trophy imports of threatened African elephants and, after litigation, won proposed protection for four species of giraffes.


We secured funding for wildlife crossings for rare red wolves in North Carolina and successfully spearheaded a bill in California to promote wildlife connectivity across California. The list goes on — read more in this issue.

But we know the coming year will be one of the toughest yet.

The second Trump administration promises deliberate attacks on our most important environmental laws and an assault on wildlife, public lands, air, water and vulnerable communities. It will try to take away protections for endangered species, dismantle climate progress, ramp up drilling in the Arctic, and rob us of our public lands.

We're not about to let that happen. We've been gearing up since the election, strategizing on litigation and developing plans for additional lawyers and activists to ensure we're ready for each new Trump scheme. We filed 266 lawsuits against Trump during his first term, succeeding nearly 9 out of 10 times for wolves, grizzlies and migratory birds. We'll do it again, standing between everything that's wild and the forces of greed and destruction.

We never thought saving life on Earth would be easy — and it's about to get harder. But I'm confident in this: We'll fight for what's right, and we'll win. As always we depend on your support, and now more than ever I'm grateful for it.



Kieran Suckling  
Executive Director



# WINS OF 2024

## ENDANGERED SPECIES

- Obtained proposed or final Endangered Species Act protections for 37 species, including monarch butterflies, dunes sagebrush lizards, white-tailed ptarmigans, Pearl River map turtles, and Bethany Beach fireflies.
- Secured nearly 6 million acres of critical habitat, including 1.4 million acres for Humboldt martens, 1.5 million acres for Florida bonneted bats, 1.6 million acres for rusty patched bumblebees and tens of thousands of acres for a dozen perilously endangered species in Hawaii.
- Scored a number of victories to help endangered species, securing protections for endangered Hawaiian petrels from light pollution and safeguards for salmon and orcas in Washington state from cyanide pollution, as well as successfully pressuring the National Park Service to remove, at long last, a fence that kept tule elk from needed habitat.

## CARNIVORES

- Won bans on wolf trapping in Idaho to protect grizzly bears from being accidentally caught in cruel leghold traps.
- Saved the lives of Washington cougars by winning a new rule restricting the number hunters can kill every year.
- Celebrated the birth of puppies to five wolf families in California and filed a landmark lawsuit to restore lifesaving Endangered Species Act protection for wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains.

## CLIMATE LAW INSTITUTE

- Spearheaded and won new California laws and policies including, a statewide fracking ban, a law affirming local governments' authority to ban oil drilling, and a law requiring companies to increase the pace at which they plug and clean up their dirty wells.
- After years of advocacy with frontline groups, defeated a massive forest biomass energy facility that threatened California's forest ecosystems and would have emitted significant climate and air pollution.
- Successfully pushed the U.S. Postal Service to increase the number of electric vehicles it will purchase for its vast fleet of trucks — from 10% to nearly 70%.

## ENERGY JUSTICE

- Played a lead legal advising role on a landmark lawsuit filed against Duke Energy, the third largest-polluting corporation in the United States, for its decades-long role in a nationwide climate deception scheme that has worsened the climate crisis.
- Brought a landmark petition — alongside the country's largest labor unions, representing more than 50 million workers — that forced the Federal Emergency Management Agency to recognize extreme heat and wildfire smoke as major disasters.
- Forced the Tennessee Valley Authority to change its bonus structure to incentivize executives to decarbonize energy.

## URBAN WILDLANDS

- Spearheaded the passage and signing of the Room to Roam Act, which requires cities and counties to promote wildlife connectivity across California.
- Helped secure permanent conservation of 1,300 acres of habitat for Quino checkerspot butterflies and blocked a 2,600-acre development on fire-prone wildlands in San Diego County.
- Prevailed on appeal against an ultra-luxury development in Northern California's Guenoc Valley that would have increased wildfire risk and destroyed habitat for golden eagles, foothill yellow-legged frogs and western pond turtles.

## OCEANS

- Helped protect beluga whales, sea otters and other species in Alaska's Cook Inlet when a court ruled in our favor and overturned oil and gas Lease Sale 258.
- Won a key victory for Rice's whales, sea turtles, giant manta rays, and other Gulf of Mexico species when a court struck down a flawed agency assessment that governs how endangered marine species should be protected from offshore oil and gas drilling.
- Following the threat of a lawsuit, helped prod NOAA Fisheries to propose federal protection for 10 giant clam species that live in the Red Sea and the Indo-Pacific.

## POPULATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Helped pass local ordinances in California to shift government procurement toward climate-friendly, plant-based foods.
- Co-led the creation of a groundbreaking white paper and roadmap (with contributors from around the world) to build a global movement for a just transition from industrial animal agriculture to equitable, humane, and sustainable food systems.
- Distributed innovative Sexual Health Emergency Preparedness kits in Florida to help people connect extreme weather, climate change, and reproductive healthcare.

## PUBLIC LANDS

- Helped secure the first-ever draft policy to protect old-growth forests and trees across the national forest system.
- Surveyed 490 stream miles of endangered species habitat in the Southwest that demonstrated damage from unlawful livestock grazing.
- Engaged in advocacy that resulted in a new policy in Colorado to be the first state to reintroduce wolverines.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- Led the passage of the Poison-Free Wildlife Act in California, which offers the strongest protections in the country against blood-thinning rat poisons, which harm and kill wildlife.
- Won three precedent-setting Environmental Protection Agency objections to air-pollution permits for oil and gas fracking operations in Colorado.
- Secured nearly \$8 million to protect sage grouse after a court victory halted a phosphate mine in Idaho that would've helped produce glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup.

## INTERNATIONAL

- Convinced major online retailers to halt sales in imperiled painted bats and totoaba fish products.
- Successfully advocated for trade restrictions on trophy imports of threatened African elephants.
- Prompted international investigations into Mexico's failure to protect critically endangered vaquita porpoises and sea turtles.
- Pursued litigation seeking trade protections for threatened corals, lizards in the pet trade, and hippos in Africa.



# 2025: OUR FIGHT FOR THE WILD

The arrival of a second Trump administration ushers in one of the most challenging eras we’ve lived through yet. As the extinction crisis and climate emergency worsen, Trump promises to reverse scores of environmental protections and give unprecedented power to anti-wildlife forces and polluters. **The stakes couldn’t be higher: What happens these next four years will reverberate for generations.**

The Center is ready. We learned how to blunt Trump during his first term — including close to 300 lawsuits with a nearly 90% success rate — and now we’re beefing up our roster of lawyers, scientists, activists, and media experts. We’ll be deploying those teams wherever they’re needed to execute the kinds of uncompromising, no-nonsense campaigns we’ve honed for years in defense of the wild. Saving the planet from Trump will require us to be nimble, powerful, and creative every single day of his administration. **Here are our top priorities for 2025.**

## 1. FIGHT TRUMP WITH EVERYTHING WE’VE GOT.

The next Trump administration will be more calculating than the last, fully prepared to dismantle bedrock laws that protect wildlife, endangered species, forests, rivers, air, and local communities. We know they want to drill the Arctic, roll back protections for endangered species, ramp up logging and mining, and drive us deeper into the climate crisis. Our job from Day 1 will be to thwart Trump and his accomplices at every turn. We’ll use all the tools we have, including litigation, public pressure, organizing, accountability, and relentless opposition. We’ll work in coalitions when we can and alone when we have to.

## 2. DEFEND CRUCIAL GAINS IN WILDLIFE PROTECTION.

Over the past three decades, we’ve secured lifesaving measures for more than 760 species and 700 million acres of critical habitat. We’ve also won new land protections and made unprecedented progress in fighting the fossil fuel industry. The Trump administration will be hell-bent on destroying the Endangered Species Act and other safeguards for wildlife, public lands, public health, and frontline communities. We’re ready to do whatever it takes to defend that hard-won progress. Bears, wolves, sea turtles, and hundreds of other species are depending on us.

## 3. WORK AT EVERY LEVEL TO END THE EXTINCTION CRISIS AND CURB CLIMATE CHANGE.

There’s a staggering amount of work to be done on the defining issues of our age: climate breakdown and biodiversity loss that are unprecedented in human history. There will be uphill battles with the White House and Congress but opportunities elsewhere to make progress, including local, state and international levels. We’ve been expanding our work in these arenas in recent years — including lifesaving victories over polluters and enhanced wildlife protection overseas — and will build on those successes in 2025.

## 4. PUSH FOR AGGRESSIVE AND VISIONARY SOLUTIONS.

No matter who’s in the White House, we must continue to push for and defend ambitious and sweeping solutions, including wildlife reintroductions, visionary measures to safeguard land and water, habitat connectivity for animals moving across the landscape, and real solutions to the climate emergency that are just, effective and match the magnitude of the crisis.

## 5. EXPAND AND LEVERAGE PEOPLE POWER TO ENSURE A FUTURE FOR LIVING THINGS.

We can’t do this work alone. Now more than ever we need to build the ranks of those who will speak out for animals and plants, land and water, local communities, vulnerable populations, and those whose very existence hangs in the balance. We’ll continue to mobilize grassroots activists and steer them toward the most effective actions to protect wildlife, the planet, and communities of all kinds. We’ll also offer our support to others fighting for justice, peace, human and reproductive rights, democracy, and a sustainable future. This moment calls for us to fight side by side against oppression, destruction, greed and authoritarianism. Only together can we win.



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**T**he Center for Biological Diversity's decades-long history is unmatched: We've secured protections for more than 760 species and 700 million acres of wildlife habitat. Help us continue this extraordinary legacy by joining the Owls Club.

By leaving a legacy gift through a bequest or making the Center a beneficiary of your retirement plan or other estate plan, you'll be supporting the fight to save endangered wildlife for generations to come. To learn more about your legacy giving options, please call us: (646) 770-7206 or email [owlsclub@biologicaldiversity.org](mailto:owlsclub@biologicaldiversity.org)

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is the membership newsletter of the Center for Biological Diversity. With the support of more than 1.7 million members and supporters, the Center works through science, law and creative media to secure a future for all species, great or small, hovering on the brink of extinction. Endangered Earth is published three times yearly in January, July and October.

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