



2008 ANNUAL REPORT



*Your Land.
Your Voice.*

ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE MISSION STATEMENT

Alaska Wilderness League leads the effort to preserve Alaska's wilderness by engaging citizens, sharing resources, collaborating with other organizations, educating the public and providing a courageous, constant and victorious voice for Alaska in the nation's capital.



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Lexi Keogh, *Deputy Director*

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD



This year the League launched an intriguing project in which we asked our friends to tell us about their passions for protecting Alaska's wild places. I encourage you to check it out on our web page at <http://www.alaskawild.org/i-am/>. The most frequent words and themes in these stories — how important it is to protect Alaska's wild places — reveal a grand reverence for the timelessness of nature's creation and the need for its preservation. We heard from firefighters, professors, secretaries, physicians, architects, engineers, filmmakers; and the list goes on — each with an inspiring story of why we should protect the extraordinary Alaska wilderness.

I am a businessman, and I am dedicated to wilderness preservation. More than 30 years ago, I joined the fight to save old-growth forests in the Pacific Northwest, which provide critical habitat for the spotted owl and other threatened species. That pivotal experience triggered a keen interest in me to devote my time and resources to protecting wild places, particularly Alaska's vast wilderness areas. Nowadays, I spend a great deal of time in Alaska — showing others its magnificence — and in Washington DC — talking with members of Congress and testifying before Congressional committees. Alaska is home to our last great wilderness and I know you agree that we cannot sit back and allow those with short-sighted self-interest to destroy it.

The League has always been an exciting and energizing organization. Yet, in recent years we have experienced a growth spurt. In just a short period of time we have evolved from a small, scrappy activist organization that successfully fought back every attempt to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge into an organization with a depth of expertise in managing wilderness campaigns across Alaska — including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, Alaska Arctic Ocean, Tongass National forest, and millions of acres of wild places that fall under the auspices of the Bureau of Land Management. While we have strengthened our ability to protect more wild places, we have maintained our commitment to build successful coalitions and organize volunteer advocates across the country.

Like those who have contributed to our "I am" project, Alaska Wilderness League has captured my passion and my imagination. I am proud to be one of the tens of thousands of supporters throughout the country who are ensuring a wilderness legacy for future generations. Whenever any of us takes an action on behalf of the League or contributes a gift, we are strengthening our case and moving one step closer to securing lasting protection for these wonderful, wild and unique places.

Thank you for your generous support — both now and in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Tom Campion". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tom" being more prominent than the last name "Campion".

Tom Campion

CAMPAIGN UPDATES



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Western Arctic:

National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska and Teshekpuk Lake

We begin by reporting a significant victory. In 2008, the Bureau of Land Management finalized a new plan for the northeast portion of the National Petroleum Reserve that deferred leasing of these vital areas until 2018. By working with our coalition partners — and through the support of activists across the country — we were able to restrict leasing to areas where leasing had previously occurred. We accomplished this because dozens of activists from across the country and several Inupiat leaders came to Washington to educate members of Congress about the importance of the Reserve. We will continue our efforts by launching a public education campaign on the Western Arctic. Working with Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Richard Kahn we are producing a video that tells the story of the Reserve and the Inupiat people who have lived on the lands and waters of America's Arctic for centuries.

Key activities for 2009:

- * With coalition partners, challenge the federal government to develop a comprehensive conservation and energy plan for America's Arctic, which includes the Reserve, the Arctic Ocean and Bristol Bay in the Bering Sea. For the Reserve, this effort calls for permanent withdrawal of the Teshekpuk Lake area habitat from oil and gas development.
- * Develop and promote a plan for managing the Reserve for the protection of its vital habitat values in priority conservation areas.
- * Ensure that public health and the subsistence culture of the Inupiat people are protected while allowing some prudent development to move forward in the Reserve.

America's Arctic Ocean:

Beaufort and Chukchi Seas

In 2008, the League was successful in blocking potentially dangerous exploratory drilling plans in America's Arctic Ocean. Early in the year, we called attention to the Bush administration's refusal to list the polar bear under the Endangered Species Act while it rushed to hold a major lease sale in the heart of polar bear habitat in the Chukchi Sea. We focused our campaign on the threats to the polar bear, to the unique marine ecosystems of the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas, and to the Inupiat people who depend upon them. As part of this effort we organized visits to Washington D.C. for our Inupiat colleagues to discuss the impending threats to their way of life. And we joined a coalition of conservation and Alaska Native groups in suing to reverse the lease sale.

During the year, the League worked with Congressional champions to draft letters to the White House and to prepare for oversight hearings regarding the Department of Interior's irresponsible actions. As a follow-up, we drafted and had legislation introduced in Congress to stop oil and gas activities in the Arctic Ocean. Then, after the November elections, we briefed the Obama administration on Arctic Ocean issues and proposed it develop a comprehensive, cautious approach to management of the Arctic Ocean.

Key activities for 2009:

- * Work with the new administration to help clean up what Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar calls the "mess" left at the department by the previous administration.
- * Work through legal challenges in court revisiting the actions of the previous administration.
- * Work to ensure industrial activities do not further threaten the Beaufort and Chukchi Sea ecosystems and the Inupiat people who depend upon them for the survival of their culture.
- * Coordinate with coalition partners to engage our members and activists across the country in activities to protect the Arctic Ocean.

CAMPAIGN UPDATES



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Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Alaska Wilderness League continues to pursue Wilderness designation for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. During the run up to last year's election, the League educated the candidates about the need to grant the Arctic Refuge the strongest protection possible, even as high gas prices forced the conservation community into a defensive posture. Pro-drilling advocates in Congress capitalized on the high gas prices to pursue any and every opportunity to demand more drilling. Their efforts were culminated in the "Drill Here. Drill Now. Pay Less" campaign run by a group called American Solutions for Winning the Future, headed by Newt Gingrich.

High gas prices pushed our campaign in an unexpected direction – instead of focusing on building momentum to advance wilderness, we had to fight drilling in the Refuge and all sorts of sensitive places along Alaska's coasts. By Election Day, the League had succeeded as one of the core group of leaders that stopped the "drill it all" advocates in 2008.

The end of the year brought new hope for the Refuge when the nation elected Arctic wilderness cosponsors as the president and vice-president of the United States. Our challenge now is to help lay the foundation for these new champions to designate the Arctic Refuge as wilderness.

Key activities for 2009:

- * Garner support for Arctic wilderness legislation in the House and Senate.
- * Empower citizen activists to educate Members of Congress by promoting Arctic wilderness during the League-led Wilderness Weeks in the spring and fall of 2009.
- * Defend the Arctic Refuge from any threats legislatively or administratively.

Environmental Justice on the North Slope

Many people in America's Arctic, especially those living in the midst of oil and gas development activities, feel that they do not have a voice in decisions being made that impact their way of life. The Environmental Justice program supports these communities by advocating for meaningful participation in decision-making, and working with them to mitigate environmental damages before they occur. We also collaborate with them on environmental protection proposals while pushing for independent industry oversight and stronger policies on human health and the environment. The League provides a direct link to Washington decision-makers for those on the front lines. In 2008, Alaska Wilderness League's Environmental Justice Program provided several important opportunities for tribal leaders and other Alaska Native community members to tell their story to decision-makers in Washington D.C. and to be a part of a collaborative effort for long-term protection of critical areas.

Key activities for 2009:

- * Make regular trips to the North Slope to build relationships with stakeholders, including a trip to Point Hope in July.
- * Coordinate weekly conference calls between Arctic and Bristol Bay communities, tribal leaders, conservation groups, and others to network and share information related to offshore oil and gas development.
- * Facilitate representatives from Alaska Native communities to travel to Washington D.C. so their voices can be brought directly to decision-makers.

CAMPAIGN UPDATES



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Bureau of Land Management's Lands in Alaska

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is obligated to identify, inventory and assess public lands to ensure the public's best interests are served. However, under the Bush administration, BLM did not conduct required studies and instead moved aggressively to recommend opening nearly 22 million acres of land to mineral development with almost no protections for critical habitat and existing land uses. In 2008, Alaska Wilderness League participated in the process to ensure that the public was kept informed and involved. Our BLM staff members moved forward to build strategic alliances, to educate the public, and to target key decision makers. Over the past year, the League focused on strengthening relationships with allies, some of which have now made BLM issues priorities within their organizations.

Also we have secured meetings with key decision-makers at the Department of the Interior and BLM to provide briefings and seek resolution for important issues. And we continue to respond to all land management planning processes. Our work has raised awareness of the damaging decisions made under the Bush administration and has opened the door for the new administration to make significant changes to BLM planning in Alaska.

We continue to foster alliances and raise the profile of BLM lands in Alaska by using iconic images and descriptions to underscore the importance of the values found on Alaska's BLM lands which feature the world's largest salmon runs, North America's largest glacier, and the world's largest caribou herd.

Key activities for 2009:

- * Advocate for the enactment of an overall conservation policy for BLM lands in Alaska and reversal of harmful BLM policies. The League will work to ensure that meaningful and enforceable new mitigation measures are adopted to protect sensitive resources from development that does occur.
- * Continue our work on the BLM's planning process, which includes identifying and protecting extraordinary natural values on public BLM lands in Alaska.

America's Rainforest in Alaska:

Tongass National Forest

In the past year, the League's Rainforest Program made great strides toward securing lasting protections and restoration for millions of acres of special places in the Tongass, including wild salmon strongholds like Port Houghton and the Honker Divide. These are the places that provide the opportunity to protect areas of the Tongass as intact ecosystems for future generations.

Our goal in the Tongass is to develop and enact ground up, collaborative legislation that is based on science and builds on the significant local and national support for changes in Tongass management. Our strategy is to work arm-in-arm with numerous stakeholders, including native groups, commercial and sport fishing interests, loggers and conservationists. By moving from an "us-versus-them" approach to one of balance and cooperation, the League is working to achieve landmark protections for the Tongass and meet the needs of those who depend upon the forest for their way and quality of life.

Key activities for 2009:

- * Defer clear-cut, old-growth logging by safeguarding old-growth stands within identified, high-value, roaded watersheds until completion of on-site, watershed-scale reviews, prioritization of restoration needs and inventory of economic young growth.
- * Pursue regional legislation that provides permanent protection of watersheds with important biological, social and other values throughout the Tongass, restores high-value watersheds and streams previously damaged by logging and development, and permanently transitions the timber industry out of a reliance on old-growth logging and into a sustainable, second-growth timber program.

CAMPAIGN UPDATES



Outreach and Communications

All of our campaigns rely on our ability to reach out successfully to those who invest time, energy and resources in the League. We employ multiple channels to communicate with our constituents — including regional and national events, coalition building, field staff activities, Wilderness Weeks, press and public media communications, film production, print materials, and online initiatives that include community-building and action alerts.

One of the League's traditional activities is Alaska Wilderness Week, which occurs twice each year in September and March. During these events, volunteers participate in a five-day activist training program to increase their skills and effectiveness on the Hill and in their own communities. One hundred fifty volunteers participated in 2008, including 30 Alaska Natives. During the March event, we held a congressional briefing on the impact of oil and gas leasing in America's Arctic.

In June, we hired a new Alaska Coalition Coordinator who is liaison to the nearly 1,000 conservation, sporting, religious, and labor groups working together to protect our public lands in Alaska. The coordinator serves as facilitator for state Alaska Coalition activities. We currently have active coalitions in five states and are looking to develop them in several other states throughout the next year.

In July, we hired an Online Communications Coordinator who is in charge of our online communications strategy, producing our AlaskaWild Updates, our action alerts, and managing the website. Whenever critical action is needed from the public to protect Alaska wilderness, we are able to marshal an immediate response from the thousands of Alaska Wilderness League online activists.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

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Key activities for 2009:

- * Grow the number of coalition members across the country.
- * Expand the number of regional activities.
- * Identify and engage thousands of new activists online and face-to-face with our field staff.
- * Work with local, national and international media to share the League's story.
- * Launch integrated communications, advocacy and fundraising campaigns using email and our website to reclaim the tone of public debate around wilderness issues and raise funds online from our subscribers to keep the fight going.

FINANCIALS

REVENUE **2008**

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Foundations | \$1,719,780 |
| Membership Dues, Individual and Corporate Contributions | \$1,539,977 |
| Other Revenue | *\$215,807 |
| Total Revenue | \$3,475,564 |

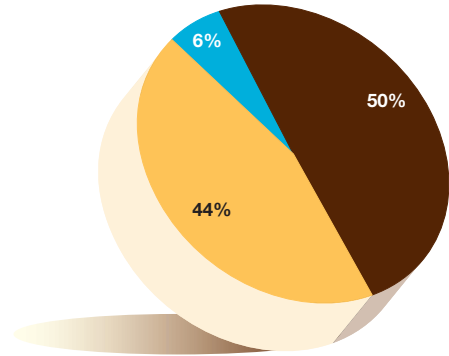
*Investment income,
merchandise income,
rent recovery.

EXPENSES **2008****Program Expenses**

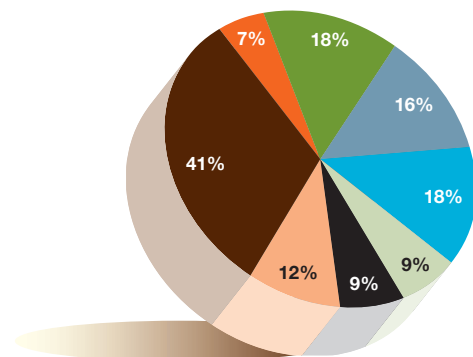
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|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Arctic | \$1,155,027 |
| BLM | \$189,893 |
| Forest | \$520,337 |
| NPR-A | \$440,231 |
| Oceans | \$511,722 |
| Total Program Expenses | \$2,817,210 |

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Fundraising Expenses | \$356,347 |
| Development | \$372,691 |
| General and Administrative | \$467,927 |
| Total Expenses | \$4,014,175 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Change in net assets | \$(537,024) |
| Net Assets, start of year | \$1,945,398 |
| Net Assets, end of year | \$1,408,374 |

REVENUE **\$3,475,564**

- Foundations
- Membership Dues, Individual and Corporate Contributions
- Other Revenue

EXPENSES **\$4,014,175**

- Arctic
- BLM
- Forest
- NPR-A
- Oceans
- Fundraising Expenses
- Development
- General and Administrative

2008 ALASKA WILD GIVING SOCIETY MEMBERS

We are grateful to the following Alaska Wild Society donors who contributed \$500 or more in 2008. The Alaska Wild Society is comprised of individuals who care deeply about protecting Alaska's vast wild places. Alaska Wild Society gifts provide the financial resources that the League needs to ensure that staff members on

the front lines have the resources they need to succeed — whether they are taking the message to Capitol Hill, crafting policy, communicating the facts to constituents, building consensus among stakeholders, collaborating with Alaska Natives, or working hand in hand with activists in the field.

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