



# 2024

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# ANNUAL REPORT



  
ALASKA  
WILDERNESS  
LEAGUE

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# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kristen Miller

2024 was a year of real progress for wild Alaska. Together, we helped secure stronger protections for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, halted destructive projects like Ambler Road and Pebble Mine, and fortified key conservation protections across millions of acres in the Western Arctic. These wins didn't happen by accident. They were the direct result of your support, strong partnerships, and a shared belief that some places are simply too wild to lose.

But as we take this moment to reflect on all the great progress secured under President Biden, it is difficult not to recognize the challenging road ahead under President Trump. This new administration has made their intentions quite clear: on top of working to undermine our faith in government, free trade, and in many ways, our faith in each other, public lands in Alaska are on the chopping block. The first month of 2025 was a rollercoaster on its own, as we celebrated a failed Arctic Refuge lease sale only to be dismayed two weeks later with the release of a Trump Executive Order aimed at expediting mining, logging, drilling, and destruction across Alaska.

This political landscape is disheartening, yes—but not unfamiliar. We've faced moments like this before. And we've never backed down.

That's why this report matters. Because even in the face of new threats, the victories we've achieved together cannot be erased. They serve as our foundation in the fights to come and a testament to our unwavering commitment to protect wild Alaska. We're not here for just one presidency. We're here for the long haul.

Photo Credit (left): Lincoln Else  
Photo Credit (background): Dave Shreffler





Photo Credit: Lincoln Else

Inside, you'll read how we worked alongside President Biden to achieve our Arctic Refuge protection goals, make progress on better protecting Special Areas in the Western Arctic, and win bold actions halting the Ambler Road and Pebble Mine. We'll talk of how we held the line and protected Biden administration actions from hostile acts of Congress, aimed to set us back through pro-drilling legislation or riders on must-pass bills.

Most importantly, you'll see how this work was powered by people like you.

Partnerships have defined Alaska Wilderness League from the beginning, and with a staff team of just 15, we know we can't achieve our lofty goals alone.

That's why we build and lead national coalitions, center Indigenous leadership and elevate diverse voices to influence federal decision-makers. Whether we're standing with the Gwich'in Steering Committee, collaborating with conservation allies, or helping Americans across the country speak out for wild Alaska, we do this work together.

Thank you for sticking with us, and for your continued support. Together, we'll soon look back on today's challenging times with pride that we rose up to the occasion.

In Solidarity,

**Kristen Miller**  
Alaska Wilderness League  
Executive Director

**“We’ve faced moments like this before.  
And we’ve never backed down.”**



From Alaska's icy Arctic peaks to its lush forest floors and everywhere in between...

## **ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE LED EFFORTS TO**

# **SECURE PROTECTIONS STATEWIDE FOR ALASKA'S PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS**

Photo Credit: Lincoln Else

## **THROUGHOUT**

# **2024**



# WHERE WE TOOK ACTION

# 2024

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Western Arctic

Ambler Road  
Rejection

Arctic National  
Wildlife Refuge

D1 Lands  
28 million acres  
throughout Alaska

Pebble Mine  
Rejection

Tongass  
National  
Forest

Arctic Ocean  
Bering Sea



## Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

# ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

From day one of President Biden's term, we set a bold objective—to ensure both congressionally mandated lease sales were behind us with no companies holding the rights to drill on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



**Thanks to relentless advocacy, legal pressure, and corporate accountability campaigns, that vision became a reality.**



The final blow came just after 2024, when in early January, not a single company showed up to bid in the second lease sale. Years of organizing, storytelling, scientific testimony, and shareholder pressure paid off. This moment wasn't luck; it was the result of powerful partnerships and public pressure, and a clear demonstration that drilling in the Arctic Refuge is not only morally indefensible, but economically unjustifiable.

**This victory belongs to all of us and to the future generations who deserve to know the Arctic Refuge as a wild, thriving place.**

Photos: Dave Scheffler



## Western Arctic

### WESTERN ARCTIC

In the Western Arctic, we focused our efforts on **protecting one of the most ecologically and culturally important landscapes** in North America.

**OUR GOAL:** to strengthen protections for the region's 13 million acres of designated Special Areas and lay the groundwork for even more conservation wins in the years ahead.

In 2024, we helped secure enhanced protections for five existing Special Areas, a major win for caribou, migratory birds, Indigenous communities, and everyone who values clean water, air, and climate resilience. Just as importantly, we pushed the administration to initiate a broader review of additional areas worthy of protection.



While time ran out to finalize protections for new areas under President Biden, the foundation is now set. With strong public records, Indigenous leadership, and a growing movement calling for permanent protection, we're well positioned to advance the work under future leadership.



## Tongass National Forest

### TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

**In the Tongass—the apex of our national forest system—2024 marked both progress and unfinished business.**

Under President Biden, industrial old-growth logging in the Tongass was largely halted in practice. **The Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy took shape, shifting the region toward a conservation- and community-first vision.** We worked tirelessly to make those protections durable, urging the administration to codify them through two key national rulemakings.



Banner and Bald Eagle Photo: Daniel Dietrich Photography  
www.danieldietrichphotography.com

While those efforts were not completed before the end of Biden's term, our advocacy laid crucial groundwork. We're prepared to renew the fight when the opportunity arises again—**because the Tongass deserves permanent protection.**

**Meanwhile, we held the line against damaging legislative proposals to privatize national forest lands in Alaska. And we built bipartisan momentum behind the Roadless Area Conservation Act.**

Thanks to collective action, over 9 million acres of the Tongass remain protected under the restored Roadless Rule. **This is a legacy worth defending—and with your support, we will.**



Photo: US Forest Service

# Other Wins for Wild Alaska

Alaska is vast, and our list of asks for the Biden administration was long. **We are proud to have helped secure the following victories during 2024:**



Photo Credits: Dave Scheffler

## 📍 AMBLER ROAD

The Biden administration **rejected this 211-mile road** through Alaska public lands in June, which would have cut through nearly 3,000 rivers and streams and disrupt the migration corridor of one of Earth's largest—and yet declining—caribou herds.



Photos: Dave Scheffler

## 📍 D1 LANDS

**28 million acres of BLM lands statewide retained their protections** against mining/oil and gas activity in August 2024.

## 📍 ARCTIC OCEAN

President Biden withdrew 44 million acres of the Bering Sea planning area in January 2025, **expanding on past anti-drilling protections in the Arctic.**

## 📍 PEBBLE MINE

**The Army Corps permit denial for this massive open pit mine was affirmed in April 2024**, after the administration finished a thorough review of how the project would impact waters in the region.

In addition, **sometimes a win is something that doesn't happen.** We are proud to have led the charge fighting against the Alaska Right to Produce Act, which aimed to undo President Biden's Arctic protections progress through an act of Congress. In addition, we helped defend the Ambler Road victory from a dangerous rider on must-pass legislation that would have reopened the Ambler Road issue. Finally, we worked to halt a package of bills by the Alaska delegation that aim to privatize hundreds of thousands of acres around Alaska.

# 2024

## BY THE NUMBERS



Photo: Florian Schulz / [florianschulz.org](https://florianschulz.org)

Background Photo: Richard Spener / [richardspenerphotography.com](https://richardspenerphotography.com)

### 70+

**MILLION ACRES**

new/stronger protections  
across Alaska's public lands

### ZERO

**# OF BIDDERS**

who showed up to the second  
Arctic Refuge lease sale

### 25

**MILLION DOLLARS**

Biden-era investment in  
the Southeast Alaska  
Sustainability Strategy

### ZERO

**# OF BILLS**

passed through Congress  
that would privatize  
Alaska's public lands

# HOW WE WON

**Alaska Wilderness League** finalized a new strategic plan last year, and in doing so, reaffirmed our commitment to playing a holistic, leadership role in the fight to protect America's Arctic. In addition—with our long track record of work to protect Alaska's wildest places—we contribute our core strengths to collaborative efforts that further public land and water protections across the state.

## ► WASHINGTON, D.C. LEADERSHIP

Navigating Congress is hard, even if you are a person and not a polar bear. **We are the only D.C.-based organization exclusively focused on protecting Alaska's land, water, and wildlife**, and our federal affairs team tracks threats in Congress, leads constituency fly-ins, and engages with our champions—including leaders in Congress and the Biden administration last year to secure policy results.

## ► ALASKA KNOW-HOW

The distance between Alaska and Washington, D.C. is far, and there's a lot of nuances around how federal policy impacts, and benefits, people on the ground in-state. **Our office in Alaska analyzes policy, works with Alaska-based organizations, and connects with people on the ground—including our Indigenous partners**—to make certain we are focusing our attention on meaningful change.

## ► PARTNERSHIPS

We know that protecting a place as vast and extraordinary as Alaska isn't something any one group can do alone. That's why a core part of our mission is supporting and strengthening the work of others who share our deep commitment to Alaska's lands, waters, and communities. From co-chairing the Arctic Defense Campaign to standing alongside and amplifying the voices of the Gwich'in Steering Committee and other Indigenous-led organizations, **we believe lasting conservation is only possible through true partnership**. Together, we form a united front—grounded in respect, guided by local leadership, and driven by a shared vision for a thriving, wild Alaska.

## ► SUPPORT FROM PEOPLE LIKE YOU

We are grateful for our nationwide network of Alaska champions, which makes our work possible by signing petitions, volunteering on deeper actions ([click here for more](#)), and providing the financial support to make our work possible. In addition, corporate partners – ranging from in-Alaska guide operations like Traverse Alaska to brands like Patagonia – help us succeed each year through their financial support.

## THE ARCTIC DEFENSE CAMPAIGN

In 2018, following the passage of the 2017 Tax Act that opened the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain to potential oil and gas development, we helped launch the **Arctic Refuge Defense Campaign**—bringing together a bold, united effort of 12 organizations committed to protecting one of America’s most iconic wild places.

Since its formation, this collaborative campaign has successfully held the line, preventing any industrial activity on the Coastal Plain. And in 2024, recognizing growing threats across the region, the campaign expanded its focus to include the Western Arctic—strengthening our collective ability to defend these critical landscapes.

As fiscal sponsor and co-chair of the campaign—now guided by a 14-member steering committee made up of Alaska-based, national, and Indigenous-led organizations—we’ve invested deeply in its success. From raising critical resources to leading strategic working groups, we’ve helped shape a coordinated communications strategy that reflects and amplifies the widespread public support for Arctic protections across the country.

ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE

# HOW WE WON BY THE NUMBERS

**170,000+**

Total AWL member and supporter actions last year.



**50**

Total U.S. states from which members have taken action or donated.



**6.1 million**

Social media impressions.



**92**

House co-sponsors on the Arctic Refuge Protection Act



**86,128**

Social media audience.



**50**

Senate co-sponsors on the Arctic Refuge Protection Act



**79,486**

Video views, on Instagram and TikTok.



# HOW WE WILL KEEP WINNING

With President Trump back in office, many of the hard-fought victories we celebrated last year are now at risk. Yet, while the road ahead will be challenging, our 32-year history has prepared us for moments like this.

We've learned that lasting change comes not only from big wins, but from steady vigilance—building a strong public record, supporting our champions in Congress, and keeping the pressure on, especially when political tides shift. We know how to navigate these moments, and with your continued involvement, we will rise to meet this one too.

**Here are a few meaningful ways you can stay engaged and help defend wild Alaska during these critical times:**

**Stay aware and involved.** Now is not the time to turn your back on wild Alaska—we must build a record of broad public support so that the next Congress and President will undo anything President Trump accomplishes in the next few years. You can stay up to date by following us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#), [YouTube](#), or [signing up for our email newsletters](#).

**Keep looking to Alaska for inspiration.** Our Geography of Hope programming started during the pandemic and today continues to connect you with inspiring stories from the north. You can visit our archive here or sign up for our email list to learn of future programs.

**Become a member.** Every dollar donated to Alaska Wilderness League helps fund critical legal, legislative and public education efforts to protect remarkable areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Western Arctic, Tongass National Forest and Arctic Ocean. [Join the fight](#) by sustaining this important work today.



ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE

**“...OUR 32-YEAR  
HISTORY HAS  
PREPARED US  
FOR MOMENTS  
LIKE THIS.”**

Photos: Richard Spener / [richardspenerphotography.com](http://richardspenerphotography.com)



# WHO WE ARE



STAFF RETREAT 2025

## STAFF

### **KRISTEN MILLER**

Executive Director

### **ALEX COHEN**

Government Affairs Director

### **ANDREA BLOCK**

Executive and Operations  
Coordinator

### **ASHLEY DAVIS**

National Outreach Manager

### **SOPHIA GRANDE**

Communications Associate

### **MADDIE HALLORAN**

Alaska State Director

### **ANGELA JOHNSON**

Development Coordinator

### **CHRIS KONISH**

Senior Director of Development

### **MLADEN MATES**

Senior Director of Finance  
and Operations

### **ANDY MODEROW**

Senior Director of Policy

## STAFF CONT.

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### **LOIS NORRGARD**

National Field Organizer  
and JEDI Manager

### **EMMA POWELL**

Federal Advocacy Manager

### **ANNA ROBINSON**

Database Manager

### **ANJA SEMANCO**

Communications Director

### **MONICA SCHERER**

Senior Director of Campaigns

### **KATIE UMPHLETT**

Arctic Campaign Manager

## BOARD

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### **KIT DESLAURIERS**

President

### **JOHN STERLING**

Vice President

### **YVONNE BESVOLD**

Treasurer

### **DEBBIE S. MILLER**

Secretary

## ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

**Toni Armstrong**

**Gareth Martins**

**Chad Brown**

**Greg Moga**

**Nikki Buffa**

**Jody Juneby Potts-Joseph**

**Lisa Collins**

**Amy Roberts**

**Ellen Ferguson**

**Leonard Steinberg**

**Tonya Garnett**

*Board and staff Rosters as of August 2025*

Background Photo: Dave Scheffler



### **MAIN OFFICE**

122 C St NW, Ste 650  
Washington, DC 20001  
Tel: 202-544-5205

### **ANCHORAGE OFFICE**

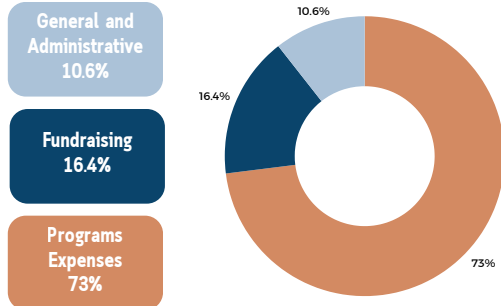
121 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite #105  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
Tel: 907-331-6099

## **ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE ACTION**

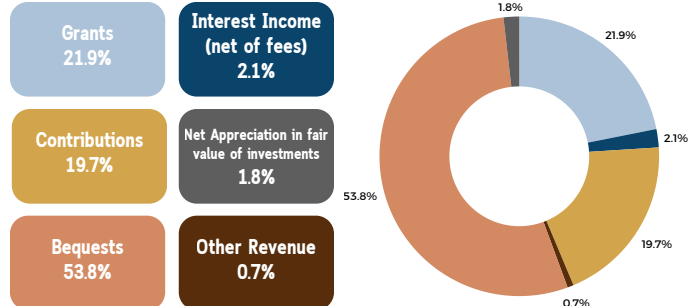
Alaska Wilderness League Action is a 501(c)4 affiliate organization to the 501(c)3 Alaska Wilderness League. The organization deploys citizen support to realize political change, legislative gains and accountability of Congress and the administration to protect Alaska's wild landscapes. Find out more at [AlaskaWildAction.org](http://AlaskaWildAction.org).

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## 2024 EXPENSES



## 2024 REVENUE



## Revenue and Expenses (Audited)

FY 2024 • September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

<b>Revenues, Support, Gains and Losses .....</b>	
Grants	1,635,203
Contributions	1,471,163
Bequests	4,022,839
Interest income, net of fees	158,012
Net appreciation in fair value of investments	135,188
Other Revenue	53,182
<b>Total Revenue .....</b>	<b>\$7,475,587</b>
<b>Expenses .....</b>	
<b>Program Expenses .....</b>	
Arctic Refuge	729,265
NPRA	887,249
Tongass	135,303
30x30	39,618
Rapid Defense	103,239
Arctic Defense Campaign	531,803
<b>Total Program Expenses .....</b>	<b>\$2,426,477</b>
Fundraising	544,424
General and Administrative	351,978
<b>Total Expenses .....</b>	<b>\$3,322,879</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$4,152,708</b>
<b>Net Assets, Beginning of Year</b>	<b>\$4,723,769</b>
<b>Net Assets, End of Year</b>	<b>\$8,876,477</b>

# THANK YOU

***None of what we have achieved would be possible without the generous support of donors like you. Thank you for fueling our fights, and for having a positive impact on Alaska's wildest places.***

Background Photo: Florian Schulz / [florianschulz.org](http://florianschulz.org)

# THANK YOU

Photo: Kili Yuyan

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

We are so appreciative of the thousands of you who gave individual donations or monthly contributions to preserve public lands and waters in Alaska. Whether you gave \$5 or \$5000, **every dollar made a difference for these iconic wild places and the countless lives that depend on them.**

## NORTHERN LIGHTS LEGACY SOCIETY

Alaska Wilderness League fondly remembers and celebrates the lives of those who left us a bequest gift in 2024. **We are extremely grateful for their generosity, and commit to honoring their legacies through our work to ensure Alaska's lands and waters continue to support vibrant communities and abundant wildlife.** Learn more at [alaskawildlegacy.org](https://alaskawildlegacy.org).

## INSTITUTIONAL DONORS

Thank you to the generous foundations and companies that provided financial support to us in 2024, including those who wish to remain anonymous.

- 444S Foundation
- Alaska Conservation Foundation
- Champion Foundation
- Hugh & Jane Ferguson Foundation
- Martin Fabert Foundation
- New-Land Foundation, Inc.
- Patagonia
- Peak Design
- The Conservation Alliance
- The North Face
- The Volgenau Foundation
- Tortuga Foundation
- Weeden Foundation
- Wilburforce Foundation

