



# OUR WILD AMERICA

Throughout its century-plus history, the Sierra Club has been at the forefront of the movement to protect America's wild places, and the beauty, escape, clean water, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities they provide. The Our Wild America campaign will work to create a national network of connected wild lands and marine areas to preserve America's natural, cultural, and recreational heritage.

## PROTECTING OUR PUBLIC LANDS



Our Wild America carries on the Club's long legacy of protecting America's beautiful and diverse wildlands. Since its founding by John Muir in 1892, the Sierra Club has helped protect millions

of acres of wild places. From its early efforts to halt rampant logging and mining in the Sierra Nevada, the Club has been on the front lines in establishing hundreds of millions of acres of wilderness, national parks, and monuments, protecting wildlife and its habitat, gaining passage of the Wilderness Act, and saving California's redwoods from the saw, the Grand Canyon from being dammed, the Everglades from being drained, and the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling.

We believe that America's public lands, waters, air and wildlife are held in "public trust" for and by all Americans. These lands provide opportunities for Americans from all walks of life to enjoy the great outdoors, come together to share experiences, and learn the value of wild places -- and in so doing, become motivated to get involved in the fight to protect our wild legacy and expand upon it. The United States was the first country to identify and designate wilderness areas through law, and the idea of protecting wild places is at the core of the American experience. With the Our Wild America campaign, the

Sierra Club is doubling down now in the fight to protect and preserve our wild heritage in the face of threats from mining, drilling, and climate disruption.

## MONUMENTS & WILDERNESS

Healthy land and healthy water are essential for a healthy population. Our Wild America will seek to secure permanent protection for unprotected public lands with high wildlife, recreation, and cultural values. One way is to keep up the pressure on President Obama to designate new national monuments by executive order -- something presidents throughout history have done to create and expand America's conservation legacy. We will also focus on expanding the National Wilderness Preservation System by identifying and promoting new potential wilderness areas that are too special to be drilled, mined, or developed, and are essential for wildlife.



The vast majority of America's public lands do not have permanent protection and remain highly vulnerable to escalating threats from mining, drilling, logging, irresponsible off-road vehicle use, and other forms of development. These lands are necessary for wild animals -- many of which are already under stress from climate disruption -- that need undisturbed lands to survive. Public lands also provide an essential resource for millions of Americans for outdoor recreation and enjoyment, as a source of clean water, and increasingly as an essential economic contributor to nearby communities. Protecting land and water stimulates local economies and brings increased job growth as outdoor recreation replaces extractive industries as the biggest revenue producer on our public lands.

### BEYOND DRILLING & MINING

Our public lands and waters are facing unprecedented threats from pollution, exploration, and drilling by coal, oil, and gas industries. One of Our Wild America's top priorities is to protect these lands from dirty fuel development by blocking mining and drilling, thus preventing more than 100 billion tons of climate-disrupting carbon pollution that could be released by development.

The Our Wild America campaign works to ensure that public lands and waters with important wilderness, habitat, recreational, and cultural values remain undeveloped -- and where development has already occurred, seeks to greatly reduce the impacts of energy development to people and wildlife.

### PROTECTING AND RESTORING FORESTS

National forests are some of America's wildest and most intact natural places. They are home to the headwaters of many major rivers and safeguard water supplies to be used for drinking water, agriculture, commerce, and recreation. They provide a safe haven for an array of wildlife and quiet recreation opportunities for people across the country.

Over the years the importance of our forests has grown as they become increasingly isolated islands of wild

space in a sea of expanding development. They face threats inside forest boundaries from irresponsible off-road vehicle use, logging, dirty energy development and road-building -- all of which are exacerbated by climate disruption, which knows no boundaries. The Our Wild America campaign works to ensure that our forests are managed for future generations in this changing climate, not given away to special interests. At the same time we are working to make sure that everyone -- regardless of age, income, race, or location -- has opportunities to explore and protect our national forests.



### NEARBY NATURE

Spectacular, iconic wild places like the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, or the Boundary Waters get a lot of glory. But for most Americans, the bulk of our experience with nature is closer to home -- the state park where we go for a Saturday afternoon picnic and walk, or the beach where we taught our kids to swim.

Protecting natural places near cities and suburbs is crucial to ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to explore and enjoy the great outdoors. These are accessible places where we can unwind in nature and connect with our family, friends, and community -- and remember why it's so important to protect our forests, coasts, mountains, rivers, and other landscapes.

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