



Guardians of the Range

Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life

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Note from your Executive Director: If you have any lingering doubts about the mission of the Western Watersheds Project this will clear those up!

Travis Bruner Settles in as Public Lands Director & Future Executive Director at Western Watershed Projects' Headquarters in Hailey, Idaho

~ by Travis Bruner

In late May, after my graduation from the University of Colorado Law School, I moved to Hailey (Idaho) with my wife Courtney and our two dogs, Hawk and Raji, to embark on an exciting and fruitful career with WWP.

Throughout my life as a hiker, camper, fly-fisherman, and upland bird hunter, I have been haunted by the environmental impacts of grazing. No other harmful use of the public lands is more pervasive or under-addressed. From an acreage perspective, grazing overshadows all other uses of the western public lands — by a long shot, as you all know. I like to imagine the public lands as one human body constantly encountering threats to its health. Mining, oil and gas development, timber, and roads represent localized, easily visible broken bones and rashes; grazing represents a slowly spreading disease, methodically destroying the whole organism.

I grew up in Bozeman, Montana where my love of nature began. I went out to the East Coast for college but came to my senses quickly and returned to the West afterwards, forever. I then lived in Oregon for about three years and Colorado for the past 10. Throughout these years, I have spent significant time exploring out-of-the-way places, particularly in New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and Oregon.

*Please see **WWP** on page 2*

Guardians at Work for You

◆ Coaching high school contestant winners from Illinois in national envirothon on rangeland sustainability and socio-economics of grazing. The Guardians, along with others, had provided background reading materials and bullet points for their state level competition, which we are happy to say they won...so they were preparing for the top levels to be held in Bozeman, Mt.

◆ Meetings on resource project proposals.

◆ Meeting with recreational folks on their perspective of federal lands being 'open' for all motorized recreational vehicles...including motorcycles. This is a growing and serious topic, about which you'll hear more.

◆ Government Affairs for Cody Chamber.

◆ Live interview for RFD-TV via Superior Livestock Auctions.

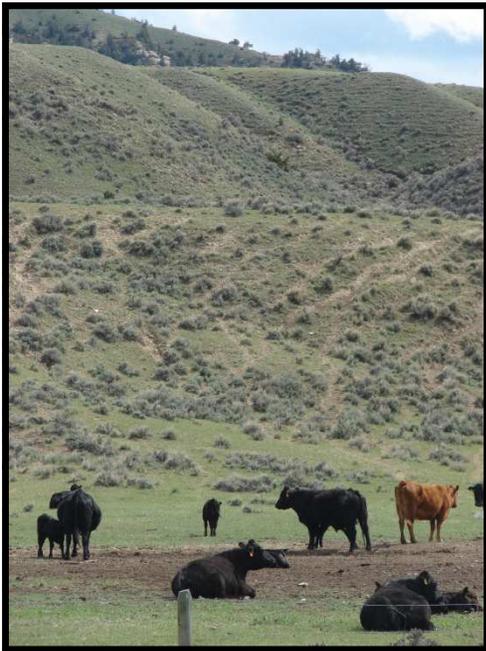
◆ Presentation on Guardians for leadership workshop with federal agency.

◆ Working on Desert Land Entry (DLE) application – stuck in the mud so to speak.

◆ Whitepaper on the interface between recreation and public land livestock grazing. This effort is to begin a dialogue not a debate about how to fairly manage this growing pressure on both permit holders, and range resources.



“Those who stand for nothing fall for anything.”
~ Alexander Hamilton 1755-1804; Founding Father
& Chief of Staff to General George Washington



Why are Publicly-Funded Scientists Allowed to Keep their Work Secret?

~ by **Ron Arnold**
Washington Examiner

Arnold is executive vice president for the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise.

Who owns taxpayer-funded science? From the way many scientists behave, it's not the taxpayers.

Many scientific studies funded by federal agencies - through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, particularly those used to justify the most horrendous regulations - hide the guts of the science.

What the scientists keep secret is the raw data they obtain in the real world and the methods they use to interpret it, as if those were personal possessions.

Independent scientist Rob Roy Ramey told me of an extreme example: "A researcher tracked endangered desert bighorn sheep with government GPS radio collars to record precise animal locations for wildlife rangers.

"He then reset the access codes so only he could download the data remotely, and refused to surrender the codes. So California Fish and Game had to track down and net-gun the bighorns from a helicopter in order to manually download the collar data, costing a fortune and endangering both animals and people."

Agency "science" frequently isn't about data collection at all, but instead is a "literature search," with researchers in a library selecting papers and reports by others that merely summarize results and give opinions of the actual scientists.

These agency researchers never even see the underlying data, much less collect it in the field. The agency then holds up those second-hand opinions as if they had rigorously tested them against the data. Using this unscrupulous tactic, you can cherry-pick the literature to make any case you want.

With so many federal reports containing no data, only conclusions put forth by another scientist, there is no way to debate, debunk or disprove the underlying facts, even requiring court orders to track down and disclose them if Freedom of Information Act requests are denied, which they frequently are (legally or otherwise).

How are we to know that the nation is not paying for mathematical errors, unreliable methods, deliberate bias, peer-review collusion, outright fakery, or even criminal activity and fraud?

All these allegations against federal agencies have emerged repeatedly - and surfaced once again at a congressional hearing (recently). The House Natural Resources Committee under Chairman Doc Hastings, R-Wash., has been investigating secretive and corrupted science, titling this hearing, "Transparency and Sound Science Gone Extinct?"

A panel of four witnesses honed in on the impacts of the Obama administration's closed-door mega-settlements on endangered species and people.

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In my professional life, I have always committed myself to work that improves the world. My two main jobs before law school were at a nonprofit and at a public school. Those jobs sufficiently paid the rent and supported my habits outside of work - playing music and spending time outdoors. During the past ten years, I completed three music CDs: solo classical guitar, string quartet compositions, and a country album.

Eventually, I decided to pursue a career where I could influence decision-making in accordance with my values, with protecting public lands from grazing as my ultimate aim. When I applied to law school, I wrote my application essay about my hope to use my law degree to eliminate grazing from public lands.

During my first year of law school, I persuaded Mark Squillace and Joe Feller to advise me on my first public comment, a comment to the Forest Service regarding the Draft Planning Rule's failure to sufficiently address grazing. As an intern at WildEarth Guardians, I submitted public comments on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest failure to consider impacts to the Mexican Gray Wolf in its grazing allotment decisions. During my final year at the University of Colorado Law School, I benefitted from the guidance of Charles Wilkinson in my continued study of public land law.

As Public Lands Director, and later as Executive Director, I will continue WWP's unrivaled work on grazing in the West. I look forward to strategizing around agency grazing decisions and policy, generally advocating for the removal of livestock from public lands, and supporting Carter Hedberg's impressive fundraising campaign. I will also endeavor to improve legislation and national policy regarding grazing.

Yours in the Removal of Livestock from Public Lands,

(s) Travis Bruner
 Public Lands Director



Please see **Science** continued on page 3



by Kathleen Jachowski

Direct from the Director: Invasive Weed Invading Our Lives & Livelihoods

BLM permit holders should prepare themselves to see reductions in their AUMs tied directly to the negative impacts of cheatgrass on their allotments.

Meeting Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs) is and will continue to be difficult to meet as acre after acre is being stolen by cheatgrass...one of many vegetative 'Frito banditos' roaming the American western public landscape.

While there are some local efforts and certainly local desire to control and/or mitigate this growing destruction, the biggest part of the problem lies at the national level in terms of philosophy, policies, implementing regulations whose wording was not quite 'refined' enough to avoid putting up firewalls against timely management.

The good news is that damage from invasive weeds on federal lands is being looked at collectively. Efforts are underway to act legislatively before it is too late to turn this situation around.

In the meantime, please keep a close eye on new and old evidence of this particular invasive on your allotments. Notify your range con and try and document with photographs its presence, its extent and location-----especially in your allotment key areas. Explore all possibilities with your range con as to what adaptive management could be applied in the immediate future...try to keep it as controlled as possible while the more long term solutions are being advocated for in Washington, D.C..

While you are at it—you can read, smile and take encouragement by checking out: www.healthyhabitatscoalition.com.

The Guardians are networking with this national level coalition to help correct problems with this weed and other invasive weeds! We're on it on your behalf!

Kathleen

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CRAIG THOMAS GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE ENDOWMENT

Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or guardians@hughes.net.

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These closed-door Big Green lawsuit settlements use the Endangered Species Act to force agencies to list hundreds of species and make related habitat decisions, not because the science supports the need, but because Big Green settlement deadlines require it.

Be forewarned: The Endangered Species Act is not about species at all, it's about land-use control. Everything in the ESA hinges on "critical habitat," land that a bureaucrat can declare useless to public and private users for a species' sake, with devastating impact.

Panel witness Damien Schiff, principal attorney of the Pacific Legal Foundation, testified that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service itself "estimated that the annual economic impact of critical habitat designation for the California gnatcatcher [a bird] is over \$100 million."

One of the Natural Resources Defense Council's first publications was "Land Use Controls in the United States," a handbook that appeared in 1977 to teach activists how to separate land from use.

The power to impose land-use controls anywhere is the real motive behind all current sue-and-settle back-room species-listing deadline deals between Big Green and President Obama's administration.

Please see Science continued on page 4

Join Guardians of the Range

LIVESTOCK OPERATORS

\$100.00 up to 50 head of cattle
\$2.00 / head 51 to 1,500 cattle
40 cents / head for sheep

BUSINESSES, INDIVIDUALS & ASSOCIATIONS

without federal grazing permits:

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\$250	RANGE RIDER
\$500	TOP HAND
\$1,000	GUARDIAN of the RANGE

Fairness Fee: One-time \$500 fee

Applicable to any new livestock operator membership that needs help within 90 days of joining the Guardians of the Range.

You may join on line:

www.GuardiansoftheRange.org

To pay by check, please make checks payable to:
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Dan Ashe, director of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, defended his sue and settle deals: "Settlement agreements are often in the public's best interest because we have no effective legal defense to most deadline cases." That's a... lie.

Ashe has a powerful legal defense that he will not use: Demand that the science underlying the species listing be examined to determine whether it is flawed, corrupt or fraudulent. Failure to pass that test could totally invalidate the original listing and everything to do with it.

Why won't he use that moral, ethical and legal defense as an impartial arbiter? First, his agency authorized funding for most of the science. Second, most of the scientists are on his agency's payroll.

Third, politically, he can't try to win because it would make the Obama administration look like it opposes endangered species protection. Directed according to such a mindset, the FWS becomes a political tool using science as its sword and shield, it cannot be an impartial arbiter.

And make no mistake, the FWS is rife with malicious officials, as witness Kent McMullen, chairman of Franklin County, WA's Natural Resources Advisory Committee, testified.

His written testimony filled nine pages with outrageous FWS dirty tricks and skullduggery in his county. For example, announcements of critical habitat designations for the White Bluffs Bladderpod plant were deliberately kept "under the radar" in Franklin County so it could become law without a big fuss. Only when Hastings asked county officials about it

did the impending decision come to light.

McMullen said, "a FWS employee that apologized in private to a farm family told them that they had been told to keep the issue quiet and to not inform landowners or locals." The star witness was independent scientist Ramey, a PhD with 33 years of worldwide experience with threatened and endangered wildlife.

Ramey hit key points hard: The data behind most ESA decisions is not publicly available. We own it and it should be posted on the web for independent, third party review - and so everyone can examine it, comment on it, and thus sap the power of the scientific elite.

Your vote is as good as any scientist's but your power isn't. That playing field can be leveled.

Ramey also emphasized that peer review is a useful but imperfect filter on information quality, subject to "species cartels" of scientific careerists who find a cash cow in the ESA. However, it is not a substitute for public access to the underlying data.

Ramey's plea was not so much for good science as for good citizenship. What passes for science in today's government is a travesty. Total transparency would help convert Big Green's worshipful scientism back into science.

We already have online data repositories such as GenBank for DNA sequences and Dryad for general-purpose data. Federal decision-making can be based on the best data, not just the best data available. Let's make it so.

