



mistake action for accomplishment. Nowhere is this more true than in Washington, where who you know, who you talk to, or how

OO OFTEN, PEOPLE

many meetings you attend are often mistaken for actual success.

For the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, 2015 was about accomplishmentachieving real results that will directly benefit fish and wildlife habitat and Americans' access to those lands and waters. Some examples:

► Through a partnership with the Wildlife Management Institute, the Mule Deer Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Quail Forever, and The Grouse Partnership, the TRCP helped to create—and protect from Congressional meddling-a range-wide conservation plan for the greater sage grouse that will impact almost 100 million acres of federal, state, and



IMPACT Fosburgh (far right) testifies before a Senate committee in favor of the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2015.

private lands. Because of this unprecedented effort, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced in September that it would not list greater sage grouse under the federal En dangered Species Act-a victory for everyone who has done hard work for real conservation. (See p. 7.)

▶ When the states, and even some members of

- Congress, began to demand that America's public lands be transferred to the states. or sold off outright, it was sportsmen and women who led the charge to remind the nation that our public lands are part of what makes America unique, providing the backbone for \$646 billion in annual spending on outdoor recreation. Through rallies in Western statehouses, a major media blitz, oneon-one work with federal legislators, and an online petition (sportsmensaccess.org) that sent more than 245,000 letters to elected officials, almost all the Western states rejected land-grab legislation. And similar efforts in Congress quietly died. (See p. 4.)
- ▶ That said, there are real problems with how many of our Western lands are managed, and the TRCP led on this front, as well. Working with a broad coalition of conservation, recreation, and historic preservation groups, we drove a campaign to convince Congress to reinvest in conservation, resulting in a boost of more than \$2.5 billion for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. (See p. 14.) Meanwhile, opponents of conservation failed to block or roll back any important conservation provisions, such as the final Clean Water Rule. (See p. 12.)



F. Weldon Baird **BOARD CHAIRMAN**

Whit Fosburgh PRESIDENT & CEO

None of these wins, or others outlined in this report, were achieved because of any one organization. These results were possible because sportsmen worked together, and reached out to other constituencies that share similar goals.

On behalf of the Board and staff of the TRCP, and its partners, we want to thank the donors and advocates that made 2015 so successful. We also want to thank the partners who stood together to do what was right for the resources and for future generations of hunters and anglers. We pledge to continue to grow your confidence in our effectiveness by harnessing action toward the achievement of real on-the-ground results for conservation, fish and wildlife, and sportsmen in 2016.

Sincerely,



PUBLIC LANDS

COMBATTING THE PUBLIC LAND GRAB ONLINE AND ON THE CAPITOL STEPS

A sophisticated web presence combined with grasstops advocacy results in powerful opposition to land transfer

transfer movement, and promoted action through digital advertising. And our efforts have halted bad legislation. Of the 37 bills advocating for the disposal of federal public lands in 11 Western states

MERICA'S 640 MILLION ACRES of public lands provide access to millions of sportsmen for hunting, fishing, and recreation. Despite the importance of these lands to our sporting heritage and our country's unique outdoor legacy, special interests intensified their efforts to sell off or transfer them to the states in 2015.

In response, the TRCP launched sportsmensaccess.org—the home base for a petition against public land transfer and the latest news on threats to hunting and fishing access. To date, more than 150 sporting groups and businesses have joined the coalition to support access to public lands. The TRCP also released a written report on the value of public lands, produced an online video addressing the

last year, only six passed, and none of those enabled the seizure of public lands or directed legal action against the government.

Sportsmen have taken a strong stand against the seizure of public lands, but the opposition is well-funded and our work has just begun. This will be another important year in the campaign to protect public access for millions of American sportsmen.



Internet Access

▶We established SPORTSMENSACCESS.ORG to serve as a co-branded digital hub for education and advocacy around the seizure of America's public lands. Visit to learn more about protecting critical public access to hunting and fishing.





LETTERS TO





HUNDREDS OF JNTERS AND ANGLERS ATTEND PUBLIC **LANDS RALLIES IN**

4 STATE CAPITOLS

#PublicLandsProud





UR HASHTAG campaign has created an online community of engaged sportsmen who are proud of America's public lands traditions. The #PublicLandsProud hashtag has been used nearly 2,300 times on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The TRCP has engaged media across the region—and the nation—with this message. We also partnered with The Nature Conservancy's Gulf of Mexico program to conduct a poll of the region's voters. The results highlighted habitat restoration as a top spending priority for Gulf State residents. In fact, two-thirds of Gulf Coast voters want RESTORE Act funds to go toward improvements for wildlife habitat, beaches. rivers, and other waters.

This year, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council selected 51 projects for funding. Of these, 92 percent satisfied at least five out of six priorities identified by the TRCP and its sportfishing partners in 2014. This initial list of projects represents an investment of more than \$156 million in better fisheries habitat and science.

WESTERN LANDS

A LANDMARK SAGE GROUSE DECISION

How the greatest collaborative conservation effort in U.S. history kept this game bird off the endangered species list

> N 2015, THE TRCP WAS ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE EPIC COLLABORATIVE conservation effort that could decide the fate of the greater sage grouse—an iconic game bird of the American West, whose decline indicates that sagebrush habitat is in trouble. Sagebrush habitat is home to more than 350 different species, including such iconic game species as pronghorn antelope and mule deer. In one of the clearest indicators of success, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell announced on



WHY IS PREVENTING AN **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

PARTNER SPOTLIIGHT

"Thriving

sage grouse

an indicator

populations are

that sagebrush

ecosystems are

healthy, and this

is important for

more than 350

and animals.

including many

that are popular

with sportsmen.

remain invested

in sustaining the

health of this

bird—and the

support it."

landscapes that

MILES MORETTI

President and

Foundation

CEO, Mule Deer

Now, we must

species of plants

► Unprecedented collaboration on these conservation effort helped achieve the original intent of the ESA, which is to conserve ecosystems and protect species before they helping to sustain hunting opportunities and big game populations. This is critical for sportsmen and outdoor

September 22, 2015, that Endangered Species Act protection for the bird's range-wide population was not warranted.

In order to reach this landmark decision, federal agencies committed to conserving more than 68 million acres of sagebrush habitat on public land, while 11 Western states developed complementary conservation plans for the bird's increasingly fragmented range. The National Resources Conservation Service's Sage Grouse Initiative also enrolled 1,129 ranches in voluntary programs that benefit sage grouse across 4.4 million acres of private land.

Through effective activation of our grassroots network, the TRCP and its partners effectively bolstered this multi-pronged approach to sage grouse conservation. We were strategically engaged with outdoor and national media hungry for grouse information. We also helped stop Congressional opponents from derailing the process. Finally, we successfully advocated for strong agency funding to implement critical conservation plans.

LISTING CONSIDERED A WIN?

warrant listing. Now, 68 million acres of sagebrush habitat on federal land will be conserved, recreation-based businesses



AST SPRING, THE GULF STATES AND FEDERAL government announced they'd reached a settlement with BP for more than \$20 billion in penalties for the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil disaster, which has threatened the long-term health of the Gulf of Mexico's fisheries, communities, culture, and economy. This settlement gives us a

BP SETTLEMENT PROVIDES CASH

PLUS: Voters support spending the \$20 billion in

penalties on projects that meet sportfishing priorities

FLOW FOR **HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

clearer picture of what the future of Gulf fishing will look like, by allowing state and federal agencies and research institutions a definitive budget for selecting the projects and initiatives that will protect and restore damaged ecosystems. But it is critical that we get to work now, rather than after a decade or more of litigation.

6 / www.trcp.org

MARINE FISHERIES

WESTERN LANDS

KEEPING HUNTING AND FISHING ACCESS INTACT IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

The way we manage backcountry areas will impact our sporting opportunities for years to come

736,000

This approach serves our sporting heritage, and supports rural com-

munities at a time when increas-

ing demands for natural resource

development threaten to fragment

these areas. The establishment of

these areas also helps prioritize

ACRES

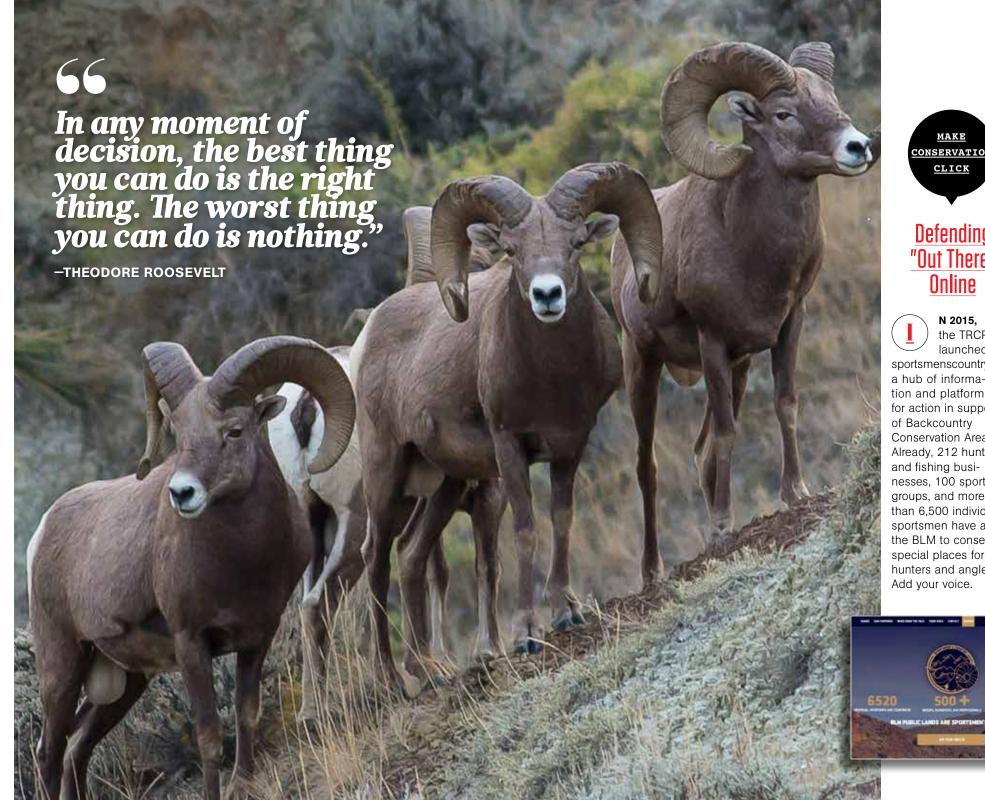
OF PRIME HABITAT WERE CONSERVED THIS YEAR

habitat safeguards and improvements. Right now, a lack of active restoration is resulting in conifer encroachment, the spread of noxious weeds, and an increased risk of catastrophic wildlife on these lands.

After years of building broad support for this new management tool, we began to see results on the ground in 2015. Our coalition convinced the BLM to conserve highquality backcountry lands through nine land-use plans in five different states. As a result of these efforts, three land-use plans in Colorado and Montana were finalized and conserve more than 736,000 acres of public land with prime habitat. Additionally, 800,000 acres of Backcountry Conservation Areas have been proposed in Nevada.



INCE 2011, THE TRCP HAS LED A COALITION OF SPORTSMEN'S GROUPS CALLING FOR THE CREATION OF BACKCOUNTRY CONSERVATION AREAS TO ENSURE THAT THE BEST HUNTING AND FISHING UNITS ON BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM) PUBLIC LANDS REMAIN INTACT, UNDEVELOPED, AND ACCESSIBLE.



Defending "Out There"

the TRCP for action in support Conservation Areas. Already, 212 hunting nesses, 100 sporting groups, and more than 6.500 individual sportsmen have asked special places for hunters and anglers.

TURNING FARM BILL PROMISES INTO ON-THE-GROUND RESULTS FOR WILDLIFE

PRIVATE LANDS & AGRICULTURE

Habitat improvements, new opportunities for access, and greater certainty for landowners impacts millions of acres







reauthorized every five years, represents the nation's largest investment in private lands conservation. And since more than two-thirds of America's land is privately held, we make sure that sportsmen pay close attention to this massive piece of legislation. After seeing critical conservation improvements written into the 2014 Farm Bill, the TRCP kept the pressure on the USDA to make sure new and expanded programs were implemented and enforced to maximize their benefit to habitat

Both sportsmen and wildlife will benefit from these major wins in ag country:

and access in 2015.

► The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program delivered \$20 million to 15 states [see map] to help open private

lands to public recreation, publicize these opportunities, pay for habitat improvements, and reduce liability concerns for landowners.

- USDA rolled out a historic conservation compliance rule, which states that farmers who drain wetlands or plow highlyerodible soil will become ineligible for federal crop insurance subsidies. The TRCP advocated for the rule to benefit fish and game, and in late 2015 we helped block a Congressional attempt to halt the rule's implementation.
- The 24-million acre Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) continues to work for wildlife. [See "Celebrating 30 Years of CRP Success"]
- The program's **State Acres for** Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative, which funds improvements to essential game habitat, enrolled its one millionth acre in 2015.

- An additional 800,000 acres was made eligible for SAFE plots, duck nesting habitat, and wet land restoration.
- A brand new CRP Grasslands initiative will conserve up to two million acres for prairie species like pheasants, quail, and ducks.



Since 2008, 29 states have received VPA-HIP grants to

open private lands for public recreation.



Celebrating 30 Years of CRP Success

THIS PROGRAM WORKS FOR FARMERS, WILDLIFE, AND SPORTSMEN

ON DECEMBER 23, 2015, THE

Conservation Reserve Program celebrated its 30th Anniversary. To toast the past and future of the Farm Bill's most successful conservation program, the TRCP and its partners threw a party on Capitol Hill with nearly 300 guests, including lawmakers, Congressional and agency staffers, representatives from 43 NGOs, and private landowners who have become conservation champions. This remarkable show of support comes at a time when Congress is hotly debating the government's role in protecting habitat and managing lands, while farmers are eager to enroll as commodity prices level off.

LAND IN DEMAND
Some of the nation's best deer duck, pheasant, and turkey habitat would be converted to crops without important conservation programs.





A HOSTILE CONGRESS SEEMS INTENT ON CASTING FISH **AND WILDLIFE BACK INTO REGULATORY LIMBO. BUT THE** TRCP WILL REMAIN VIGILANT IN ITS DEFENSE OF CLEAN WATER.

Through grassroots mobilization, Hill meetings, media attention, and digital advertising, our community helped convince the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers to issue a rule clarifying the Act. On May 27, 2015, thanks in large part to these efforts and comments of support from sportsmen and women across the country, the agencies issued the Clean Water Rule, clarifying and restoring Clean Water Act protections to headwater streams and wetlands.

This has been a landmark victory for hunters and anglers, after nearly a decade of educational outreach and coalition-building by the TRCP. However, the fight is not over. A hostile Congress seems intent on overturning this good work and casting fish and wildlife populations back into regulatory limbo. The TRCP will remain vigilant in its defense of clean water and healthy habitat to protect fisheries and flyways for the next generation.



vation programs that have

In July 2015, the TRCP

helped to organize the White

House Drought Symposium—

the administration's first-ever

strategy session with the public

on drought. The event brought

stakeholders, including sports-

together nearly 40 diverse

for hunters and anglers.

positive impacts on the ground

WITH CALIFORNIA SUFFERING

FISHING FORECAST We need to plan for drought before cities farms, and fish are already in crisis.

through a severe drought and Western states struggling for solutions to contentious battles over water supplies, the TRCP has been encouraging the federal government to set a proactive, conservation-minded agenda for action on drought.

In February 2015, the TRCP published Snapshots of Success, a report that features efforts led by sportsmen to improve freshwater habitat for fish and wildlife. The report highlights successful programs ripe for additional federal men, for an open dialogue on the best ways to bolster the investment, like the Bureau of country's drought resilience and Reclamation's WaterSMART forestall future threats. Grant Program and Department of Agriculture conser-

> the symposium, the TRCP and its partners developed 20 recommendations for federal agencies to help fish and wildlife better withstand drought. In fact, by year's end, we'd already helped spearhead success on two of these recommendations:

► Congress extended the WaterSMART program and

Based on discussion from increased funding by 25

> ► The Department of the Interior created a Natural Resource Investment Center that will help creatively finance water and natural resource stewardship.

PLUS: The administration is making water a priority issue going into 2016, bolstered by support from our community.



"We appreciated the opportunity to participate in the symposium and provide recommendations based on our work with farmers and ranchers in the Klamath, Yakima, and Colorado river basins. As brutal drought conditions continue throughout the West, cooperation among agricultural producers, conservation interests, and municipal users is essential."

LAURA ZIEMER, Water Policy Advisor, Trout Unlimited

CONSERVATION FUNDING

BIPARTISAN SUPPORT BOOSTS INVESTMENTS IN HABITAT AND ACCESS

Because conservation isn't red or blue—it's red, white, and blue—and it takes green

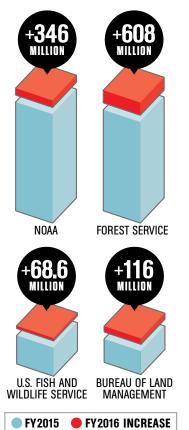
UNDING IS THE
lifeblood of conservation—even the
best policies and
land managers can't
protect our natural
resources without it. After four
decades of spending

cuts, federal commitments to conservation are on life support. The Fish and Wildlife Service has lost 12 percent of its workforce in the last four years, while 200 wildlife refuges have no dedicated staff at all. The Forest Service has had to cut 39 percent of its personnel to cover the costs of fighting devastating wildfires.

That's why, in 2015, the TRCP led a push for a bipartisan budget deal with better investments in conservation. Here's how we got the message out to Congress >

FUNDS AFIELD More federal investment in conservation allows these folks to do more for fish and wildlife. GRASSROOTS EMAILS **MEETINGS OP-EDS IN** TRCP PARTNERS FROM HUNTERS WITH 🥻 **MAJOR** SIGNED A JOINT AND ANGLERS **LAWMAKERS NEWSPAPERS** LETTER

And it paid off. Congress passed a budget deal that increased funding for conservation by nearly \$2.5 billion. The deal includes a \$1.14-billion increase for these agencies:



THE BOTTOM LINI

More funding for conservation equals healthy fish and wildlife populations, better habitat, and more access and opportunity for hunters and anglers.

Spotlight on Access: Land and Water Conservation Fund on the Rise

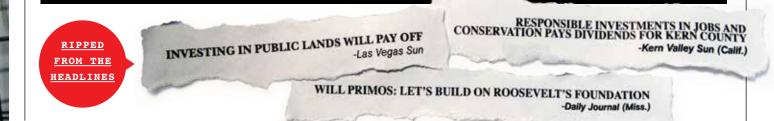
THE END OF 2015 MARKED A NEW CHAPTER FOR THIS SUCCESSFUL CONSERVATION FUNDING PROGRAM



LACK OF ACCESS IS ONE OF THE

primary challenges facing American hunters and anglers today. In fact, one survey found that 23 percent of hunters and 20 percent of anglers lost access to land or waters in the past year. This is why the Land and Water Conservation Fund—which helps pay for the acquisition of new hunting and fishing areas, expansion of public access, and improvements to fish and wildlife habitat—is critical to sportsmen and the \$646-billion outdoor recreation economy.

We worked hard to keep this important fund from expiring or being gutted this past fall. The TRCP spearheaded a letter from 115 sporting businesses—from giants like Orvis and Pure Fishing to local gun shops and fishing guides—advocating for the renewal of the LWCF. In December, Congress reauthorized the program for three years and funded it at \$450 million for 2016—an increase of nearly \$150 million over the previous year.



2015 FINANCIALS

·**19**% Spent on Conservation **Program Services**



Statement of Financial Position

Year ended December 31, 2015

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,828,231
Grants Receivable	\$404,150
Accounts Receivable, Net of Long Term Portion	\$155,367
Prepaid Expenses	\$97,101
Fixed Assets - Net	\$32,885
Grants Receivable - Long Term Portion	\$857,636

Total Assets \$3.375.370

LIABILITES & NET ASSETS

LIABILITES

Accounts Payable/Accrued Liabilities	\$48,667	
Accrued Salaries and Related Benefits	\$79,257	
Total Current Liabilities	\$127 924	

NET ASSETS

Temporarily Restricted	\$2,681,312
Board Designated	\$388,452
Unrestricted	\$177,682

Total Net Assets	\$3,247,446
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$3,375,370

Statement of Activities

Year ended December 31, 2015

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Foundation Grants	\$110,000	\$4,147,644	\$4,257,644
Donations	\$362,790	\$60,000	\$422,790
Contributions	\$333,378		\$333,378
JR Conservation Fund	\$2,500		\$2,500
Non-Profits and Associations	\$500	\$31,650	\$32,150
Other Revenue	\$171,328	\$17,197	\$188,525
Interest Income	\$4,181		\$4,181
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$3,181,140	(\$3,181,140)	
Total Public Support and Revenue	\$4,165,817	\$1,075,351	\$5,241,168

EXPENSES

Program Services	\$3,410,759	 \$3,410,759
Supporting Services		
Management and General	\$403,718	 \$403,718
Fundraising	\$413,467	 \$413,467

otal Supporting Services	\$817,185		\$817,185
otal Expenses	\$4,227,944		\$4,227,944
Change in Net Assets	(\$62,127)	\$1,075,351	\$1,013,224*
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$628,261	\$1,605,961	\$2,234,222
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$566,134	\$2,681,312	\$3,247,446



THE TRCP IS A NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION AND TAKES

great pride in our financial efficiency, accountability to donors, and transparency. We work to use every dollar contributed as efficiently as possible. In 2015, the TRCP spent 81 percent of your contributions on programs. Our overhead ratio was just 19 percent, and we carefully monitor our administrative and fundraising spending to ensure control, transparency, and effective fundraising

The TRCP has received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator each of the three consecutive years they've rated us. Only 14 percent of charities rated have achieved this distinction. We've also been awarded the highest-possible rankings from Guidestar and the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance

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No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.

-THEODORE ROOSEVELT

\$10.000+

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OUR LEADERSHIP

We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune."

-THEODORE ROOSEVELT













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