



Great Old Broads for Wilderness Media Kit

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Great Old Broads for Wilderness Media Kit

Mission

Great Old Broads for Wilderness ("Broads") is a national grassroots organization, led by women, that engages and inspires activism to preserve and protect wilderness and wild lands.

Conceived by older women who love wilderness, Broads gives voice to the millions of Americans who want to protect their public lands as Wilderness for this and future generations.

As a women-led* organization, we bring knowledge, leadership, and humor to the conservation movement to protect our last wild places on earth.

Vision:

Wild public lands are treasured for their intrinsic values and protected for current and future generations.

Values Statement:

Wilderness and public lands are for everyone; they are the heritage of all and a gift to future generations. Wild places, once destroyed, may be gone forever.

We value:

- National public lands and waters.
- The spirit and intent of national conservation legislation such as the Wilderness Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and Antiquities Act, which protect wild places that once destroyed, may be gone forever.
- The natural world as a community where humans, as one small piece of an interconnected whole, must take responsibility for care.
- Sound science as a basis for informed decisions.
- Being bold, courageous, and fearless in defense of wild lands.
- Humor, grace, common sense, and passion.
- Openness to all perspectives.
- Dialogue to resolve conflicts.
- Expanding racial, cultural, and gender diversity in the conservation movement.
- Broadness as a state of mind.

** For Broads, the term "women" includes and represents anyone who self-identifies as a woman.*



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Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Sara Husby, Executive Director

Board of Directors

(May 2022)

- Anne Heikkila, Co-Chair
- Micky Ryan, Co-Chair
- LD Delano, Vice Chair
- Pip Coe, Secretary
- Suez Jacobson, Treasurer
- Mary O'Brien
- Anna Lee Vargas
- Laura Hodge
- Corina Lopez

The Board of Directors actively provides guidance on strategic direction and assures that the necessary resources—including funds, staff, and professional expertise—are available to accomplish Broads' mission.

- Directors serve 3-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.
- The Board meets quarterly by conference call to focus on strategy, advocacy, budget, programs, activities, and fundraising.
- An annual retreat is held near the end of the fiscal year (December 31) to review past actions, plan future directions, and approve the budget.
- Each member is expected to take an active role in the organization.
- Each board member brings unique and valuable talents and networks to the organization. Board members taking on roles as officers will generally contribute more hours of work than other members.



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Council of Advisors

For years, our organization has relied on a select group of individuals with a unique set of skills, experience, and resources—the Great Old Broads’ Council of Advisors. This group provides the expertise, financial support, and encouragement necessary to meet the challenges facing us in our efforts to protect public lands and the values we hold dear.

Aside from providing advice on specific issues to the Broads’ national office and Broadbands, the Council serves as a “kitchen cabinet,” advising the Board of Directors on matters of national importance to the Broads.

Council of Advisors (May 2022)

- Steve Allen
- Joe Breddan
- Rose Chilcoat
- Craig Childs
- Dave Foreman
- Maggie Fox
- Ginger Harmon
- Vicky Hoover
- Libby Ingalls
- Frandee Johnson
- Matt Kenna
- Linda Liscom
- Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk
- Bill Meadows
- Caroline Kirksey Munger
- Marcey Olajos
- Tim Peterson
- Carl Rountree
- Lois Snedden
- Blake Spalding
- Liz Thomas



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Our Work

Broads empowers women to use democracy to defend our birthright—America’s public lands and waters. We train and mobilize advocates in communities across the nation to rally for wilderness designation and public land protections to ensure clean air and water, and a healthy habitat for all of Earth’s creatures. We focus on four core activities:

EDUCATION

Education is the foundation of action and the core of our work. We believe in placed-based education to develop a strong understanding of the issues, history, and important link between public lands and mitigating the effects of a changing climate. Our work is guided by science and research to ensure we advocate for what is best for the land. Our members learn to act as citizen scientists, documenting impacts on our public lands, and gathering data used to evaluate land conditions and support protection proposals.

ADVOCACY

Broads takes a grassroots approach, connecting people with a desire to get involved and guiding them on how to take action. Individual members and our 40 (and growing!) Broadband chapters across the country participate in land management decision-making to keep threats at bay and support policies that protect public lands. We coach Broadband leaders and members how to hold government agencies and decision makers accountable for sustainable management of our public lands, and how to engage communities to effect change. We’re there to speak at legislative and agency hearings for the voiceless—wilderness and wildlife.

STEWARDSHIP

We show our love for the land through projects that repair and restore our wild places. We teach volunteers to document impacts to landscapes and gather data. Broads are the eyes and ears, the boots on the ground, the reporters and supporters. From re-seeding to fence building to trail repair, Broadbands work with land management agencies such as the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to lend their loving hands to tend public lands.

FUN

As legendary columnist Molly Ivins once said, “You got to have fun if you plan on staying involved for the long haul.” This is serious work, but we don’t take ourselves too seriously. Broads have fun learning and doing, making their voices heard, putting pen to paper, and getting close to nature. The challenges often feel unrelenting, but being on the land leads to a natural camaraderie with others who share the enthusiasm for the fight for America’s wild lands.



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History

1989 – A Lively Beginning

Great Old Broads for Wilderness was founded in 1989 on the 25th anniversary of the Wilderness Act by a feisty bunch of lady hikers who wanted to refute Utah Senator Orin Hatch's notion that wilderness is inaccessible to elders. About that time, wilderness designation had been proposed for Escalante, and Senator Hatch opposed it, saying, "...If for no other reason, we need roads for the aged and infirm."

Outrage Begets A New Voice

Founder Susan Tixier and her fellow activists were outraged, and with sudden clarity, saw that an important voice was missing from the environmental movement: the older woman—impassioned, experienced, not afraid to speak out, and definitely not needing roads. The group committed themselves to grassroots advocacy to preserve wilderness and wild places for future generations.

What's in a Name?

Tixier and her colleagues happily settled on their role and purpose, but hadn't yet decided on what to call themselves. Fate brought an answer to them. One fine day while the gang was out hiking and discussing what action to take next, they came upon a group of elderly ladies coming off a trail—dusty, tan, sinewy, and gray-haired. Someone remarked "What a bunch of great old broads."

The name stuck. It captured the spirit of the budding entity they envisioned, emphasizing the old and the feminine. More importantly, the moniker had humor, a core value of the group from the beginning.

Concept to Coalescence

The early framework declared Broads to be a nonprofit, social organization dedicated to the protection, use, and enjoyment of the wilderness (designated, proposed, or imagined).

The early days were informal—there were no dues. To become a member you just had to declare yourself one, and then you could buy a T-shirt to proclaim it to the rest of the world. The point was to have fun while doing what you were passionate about.

The Broads sat around kitchen tables and brainstormed. The plan was to spend their time and energies on action protecting wilderness, not creating a formal organization with a paid staff.



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History (Cont.)

A Force to Be Reckoned With

By 1993, with a growing membership and expenses, the board decided to institute annual dues—though payment was still optional. In 1994, it became necessary to hire a staff person to keep the membership database, publish the newsletter, *Broadsides*, and handle public relations. Broads was on its way to becoming a cohesive organization.

Today, Broads has a small staff and our ranks have grown to more than 8,500 members and supporters. There are nearly 40 Broadbands (chapters) in 17 states across the country dedicated to local and national wilderness issues. Our members include men (Great Old Bros) and younger women, too.

Wherever there are wilderness concerns, you'll find Broads jumping into the fray.



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Broadbands

Broadbands are member-run regional or local chapters across the country formed around Broads' mission to preserve and protect wilderness and wild lands.

These chapters, led by volunteer leaders and co-leader teams, are made up of passionate and dedicated Broads and Bros of diverse backgrounds and ages, with a fire for change and a love for the land.

Have Fun Doing Serious Work

Focused on education, advocacy, outreach, and collaborative stewardship projects—humor and joy play a fundamental role in our work. Broadband members share stories, experiences, and passions; creating deep connections to each other and the earth that lead to stronger Broadbands and stronger advocacy.

As for activities, there's something for everyone:

- Educational events, lectures, and films.
- Stewardship projects (monitor and collect data, build and maintain trails, remove invasive plants, etc.)
- Public meetings, write letters, and rallies.
- Working with land management agencies and political leaders.
- Represent Broads at local events, make presentations, and attend gatherings.
- Hiking, camping, and road trips.
- Pot lucks, book clubs, and other gatherings.



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Broadwalks and Broadworks

What's a Broadwalk?

Broadwalks are multi-day place-based educational events where you get to know an area through hikes, stewardship projects, and local experts. There's plenty of on-the-ground exploration and discussion with people who know the landscape, its history, flora and fauna, and land health.

Broadwalks give you an in-depth experience where you'll come away with a better understanding of why these landscapes warrant protection.

What's a Broadwork?

Broadwork events are stewardship-focused trips coordinated with partner organizations and agency land managers. Activities range from field observations and monitoring of land health to all-out river restorations and invasive plant removal. No experience is necessary. Broads and Bros are trained and schooled in the "whats" and "whys" behind the Broadwork activity. Conversations and learning continue throughout the event.

Keeping It Local

Broadband chapters across the country host their own style of Broadwalks and Broadworks focused around regional or state issues. Each event has a flavor of its own, but includes many of the same elements as national events.



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What Are Public Lands?

Broads' work is centered on the preservation and protection of wilderness and wild lands. These lands are "public" lands—not owned by individuals or businesses—they belong to all Americans. Government entities—local, state, or federal—manage them on our behalf.

Because the lands are held in trust for the public, every American has a say in how these lands are managed.

Most of the lands Broads are working to protect are federal lands managed by four Federal agencies. These lands, when claimed by the US government, were mostly Native American lands.

Different Management—Different Uses

The bulk of the management job is split between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), managing 10.5%, and the Forest Service (USFS) managing 8.5%. Two other agencies manage smaller pieces—the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Park Service (NPS) each manage about 4% of US land.

The BLM, the USFWS, and the NPS are agencies of the Department of Interior, while the USFS is an agency of the Department of Agriculture. This curious arrangement continues to reflect the view of USFS founder Gifford Pinchot that forests were agricultural products to be managed for "wise use," rather than preservation.

The agencies that manage most of our public lands are not strictly in the business of protecting our lands. In particular, the missions of the BLM and the USFS focus more on using resources and meeting needs for current consumption. That's why the US government leases public lands to be used for logging, grazing, fossil fuel extraction, and mining.

The mission statements of the BLM and the USFS are similar. Both agencies operate under a "multiple use" guideline, managing for both current consumption and preservation for the future.

The USFWS has a more eco-centric mission to "conserve, protect and enhance," wildlife and the places they live. However, the ultimate goal remains people-centric—management for the "continuing benefit of the American People."

The National Park Service's mission is distinctly different and clearly preservation-centered, calling for the NPS to "preserve unimpaired" "cultural resources and values."

But of all public lands, only designated wilderness areas are fully protected from development.



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What Are Public Lands? (Cont.)

A Concern for Conservation

When people began to see the devastation of natural resources and loss of wild lands in the US, particularly the logging and the damming of Hetch Hetchy in California's Yosemite, they began to formulate legislation that would protect wild lands in perpetuity. That was the genesis of the Wilderness Act, which was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964.

This law gave Congress the power to designate lands as Wilderness Areas. This is the highest form of protection for wild lands, a designation that protects those lands from future development of any kind. In fact, these are lands where there are no roads, no structures, no "mechanized" travel (including mountain bikes) and "man is only a visitor who does not remain."



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What is Wilderness?

We like to think of Wilderness as our gift to future generations of Americans. It's one piece of the ecological puzzle to save our country from ever-expanding development. It's refuge and corridor for wildlife. It's biological diversity. It's untamed forest, desert, coast, and mountain. It's quiet. It's restorative. It keeps us sane.

Protecting America's wild landscapes is what Great Broads for Wilderness is all about. It takes an act of Congress to designate an area as wilderness—and YOUR voice is an important part of protecting our wild places.

The Wilderness Act of 1964

The Wilderness Act created the National Wilderness Preservation System to preserve and protect public lands that fit the following definition of wilderness:

"... in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, [Wilderness] is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.

An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which:

- *Generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.*
- *Has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.*
- *Has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.*
- *May also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."*



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What is Wilderness? (Cont.)

Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are landscapes that are currently being managed as Wilderness because they qualify for designation as Wilderness by Congress. These are roadless areas lacking human development that also have “wilderness characteristics”—opportunity for solitude and reflection.

Still, the vast majority of the wild lands managed by Federal agencies are open to consumptive uses of some kind.

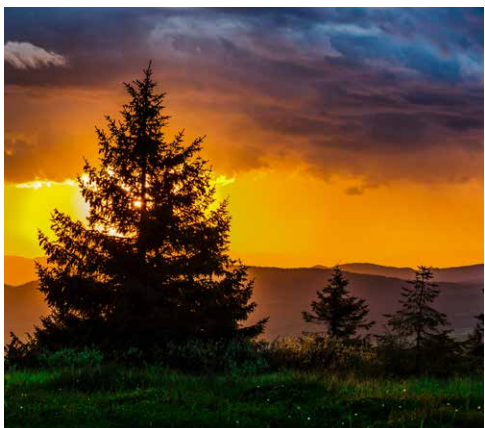
There are also laws beyond the Wilderness Act that provide ways to designate lower levels of protection for our public lands. Designation of National Parks by legislation protects those lands from commercial development, setting them aside for conservation so that present and future generations can enjoy, be inspired by, and use them for education. There are 62 “National Parks,” but 419 national park sites, with at least one in every state. National Monuments, which are designated by Presidential decree, are also protected from commercial development.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) manage their public lands according to “resource management plans” (RMPs) that must comply with the guidelines of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Much of Broads’ work involves participating in these resource management plans during the public comments periods and using NEPA in court to challenge plans that will lead to the degradation of wild lands and contribute to climate change.



Great Old Broads for Wilderness



5%

of the entire U.S. is
protected as wilderness.
Alaska contains just over
half of America's
wilderness.



Only

2.7%

of the contiguous U.S. is
protected as wilderness.



Historically, wilderness
has been a bipartisan issue.
Broads will continue to work
towards bipartisan support, in
spite of a divided Congress.

POSITION STATEMENT

Wilderness Protection

Wilderness is the highest level of protection for public lands. These lands are designated by Congressional action according to the 1964 Wilderness Act.

Wilderness lands reduce the impacts of climate change. Increasing the acreage of designated wilderness is critical to the survival of all life on Earth.

- We acknowledge that America's wilderness and public lands were once homelands to Indigenous people, often taken through force or coercion. Tribal people hold significant knowledge of these complex ecosystems that may benefit long-term practices to protect them. Collaboration with tribal peoples and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge is valued and will contribute to the sustainability of the land.
- New wilderness legislation must be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the 1964 Wilderness Act.
- All public lands with wilderness qualities should gain protection based solely on those qualities.
- Protection of designated Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas should never be reduced as the result of *quid pro quo* trades that result in privatization, development, or other activities that compromise protection and/or degrade public lands.
- Wilderness legislation or proposals must not compromise or reduce the existing protections for Wilderness Study Areas, Roadless Areas, National Park Units, Wildlife Refuges or other protected lands. These lands are important for fish and wildlife habitat, air and water quality, cultural heritage, and as refuges of peace and quiet.
- Although livestock grazing is allowed on Wilderness lands under the Wilderness Act, Broads supports the elimination of grazing in designated wilderness areas and encourages voluntary, permanent retirement of grazing allotments.

The activities undertaken by Great Old Broads for Wilderness are guided by the overriding principle that the focus of attention must be on what is best for the land and water, for Mother Earth.



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Great Old Broads for Wilderness



25%

of U.S. fossil fuels are
extracted from public
lands.



40%

of the coal mined in the
U.S. comes from public
lands.



25%

of the greenhouse gases
emitted by the U.S. come
from fossil fuel extraction
on public lands.

POSITION STATEMENT

Energy/Mineral Exploration & Extraction

Energy and mineral exploration and extraction has many harmful impacts in addition to releasing carbon and contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.

The construction of pipelines, roads and utility corridors, and the use and transport of toxic materials negatively affect water and air quality, wildlife habitat, and the natural quiet of the lands.

- Designated wilderness, Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, roadless areas, and lands with pristine character, wilderness qualities, and critical wildlife habitat and corridors must be protected from the impacts of energy and mining activities.*
- Energy and mining activities should not be allowed in future designations of protected lands.
- Great Old Broads advocates for reducing the demand for fossil fuels through conservation and sustainable alternative energy sources. We support just transition to secure workers' rights and livelihoods.
- Renewable energy reduces fossil fuel dependence, decreases air and water pollution, and mitigates the threat of climate change. However, since all large-scale energy sources have impacts, permitting decisions on federal public lands should avoid or minimize impacts to plant and wildlife habitat, wilderness-quality lands, cultural resources, and other unique values.

* We recognize in some cases, designation language specifically allows such activities.

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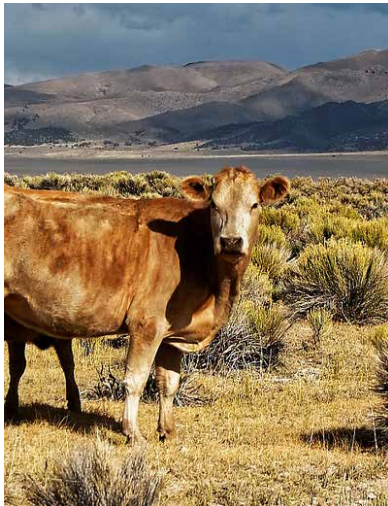


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POSITION STATEMENT

Livestock Grazing

Commercial livestock grazing impacts more total acreage than any other permitted use of public lands. From headwaters and high mountain meadows to hot, dry deserts, grazing compacts and erodes soil and destroys biological soil crust. It consumes, fouls, and warms water, removes flowers, seeds, and cover upon which wildlife depend, depletes native plant and wildlife species, spreads invasive species, and damages cultural resources.

Grazing interests fuel demands to remove native woody vegetation, kill top predators, and alter water cycles by harnessing natural springs and damming runoff. Public land managers generally defer to private permittees and local governments, while the public is excluded from nearly every aspect of grazing decisions.

More than
**\$100
million**
a year spent on direct
federal subsidies
for public lands
livestock grazing.


Ranchers pay only
\$1.35
a month to graze
1 cow and calf
or 5 sheep or goats
on America's public lands.

The same cost on
private lands is
\$8 to \$23.

- Broads supports voluntary grazing permit retirement, followed by permanent allotment closure, for ecosystem or species recovery and for increasing ecosystem resilience in the face of climate change.
- Although livestock grazing is allowed on wilderness lands under the Wilderness Act, Broads supports the elimination of livestock grazing in designated wilderness.
- Natural waters, including springs and their associated wetlands, must be protected from livestock grazing impacts.
- Vegetation treatments (e.g., removal of piñon and juniper) should only be undertaken to protect and promote potential native vegetation and natural processes and not for the purpose of increasing forage for livestock or wild ungulates.
- Public lands grazing decision processes should seek and respond to evidence, research, and suggestions provided by interested members of the public; non-governmental organizations; tribes; and scientists, as well as permittees and government representatives. Agency decision making should involve interdisciplinary teams, consideration of climate trends, and public transparency.
- Broads are encouraged to document grazing impacts, communicate concerns to decision makers, suggest alternatives, and initiate and participate in consensus collaborations to minimize adverse impacts of livestock grazing.

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POSITION STATEMENT

Roads & Vehicular Use

Roads and associated infrastructure have been identified as one of the greatest threats to biodiversity and their impacts are even greater in the face of climate change.

Roads bring noise pollution, greater erosion, and degrade water and air quality. They damage soils, vegetation, riparian zones, and wetlands; disturb wildlife and increase mortality; and reduce and fragment habitat.

86,000
miles of roads on lands
managed by the Bureau of
Land Management



380,000
miles of roads in our
national forests and
grasslands. That's 8 times
more than the U.S.
interstate highway system.



Only
2%
of the lands in the
continental U.S. are
roadless

- Broads opposes exemptions from the federal Roadless Area Conservation Rule (RACR), and believes the few remaining roadless areas should persist without roads to protect habitat connectivity and carbon sequestration.
- Public land managers should strictly enforce compliance with the RACR, Wilderness Act, and all laws, regulations, and policies for roads and routes on public lands.
- In land use planning processes, the USFS and the BLM should close roads when they threaten clean water, habitat, and the recovery of endangered or at-risk species.
- Land management plans for USFS and BLM lands must not include new roads without specific NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) analysis, including consideration of long-term cumulative effects on wildlife, watersheds, and climate.
- All motorized and mechanized (e.g. bicycles) vehicles on public lands must be limited to designated motorized and mechanized routes to avoid damage to fragile ecosystems and to cultural/historical sites.
- Any routes on public lands that are not specifically designated as *open* should be managed as *closed*, with appropriate compliance and law enforcement.
- E-bike use should be confined to designated open motorized routes.

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POSITION STATEMENT

Climate Change

Climate change affects all life on Earth. Wilderness can provide unbroken habitat and wildlife corridors to give plant and animal species room to adapt to changing conditions. Wilderness provides conditions for clean water, less severe floods, and greater biodiversity. Intact wildlands sequester carbon, particularly in high-biomass forests, riparian areas, oceans, and coastal wetlands.

Activities on
public lands generate
4.5 times
more carbon per acre than
those lands absorb each year.



The giant coastal redwood
forests of California store
7 times
as much carbon as the
Amazon.



Coastal ecosystem soils,
such as estuaries, store
10 times
the carbon per acre
than forests.

- Keeping fossil fuels in the ground is critical to global temperatures and preventing the Earth's vital signs from reaching a tipping point.
- Fossil fuel corporations must not be allowed to shift the costs of climate disruption to society while reaping profits from public lands.
- National forest planning rules must require conservation of forested areas with higher-than-average carbon biomasses.
- Commercial timber harvests and development should take place on public forests only when careful analysis of cumulative impacts demonstrates that carbon benefits exceed carbon costs over two to four decades.
- Natural water cycles on public lands must be rigorously protected to maintain ecosystem quality, quantity, integrity, and stability for the benefit of ecosystem and public health.
- Public land management planning must minimize the climate impacts of resource development, livestock grazing, roads and vehicular routes, and recreation. Wild public lands should be prioritized for carbon storage, mitigating climate change, biodiversity, and promoting resilient landscapes.

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Great Old
Broads
For Wilderness

Get Into The Wild



Great Old Broads for Wilderness Media Kit

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity

Great Old Broads for Wilderness is committed to building a diverse, inclusive, and broader conservation community.

Our Broad commitment means:

- We are focused on the inclusive value that “broadness is a state of mind.”
- We are open to all perspectives while encouraging dialogue to resolve conflicts.
- We develop deep and authentic partnerships with diverse communities to further a broad set of conservation goals.
- We understand and respect the goals of communities with which we work.
- We identify and find ways to eliminate barriers that prevent full diversified public participation.
- We seek common ground to work collaboratively for the long-term.

We define diversity broadly to include age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, geographies, socio-economic status, and political affiliation.

By including diverse voices, we seek to engage the cooperation of as many constituencies as possible to strengthen support for ecosystem preservation and balance, conservation of public lands, and the environmental justice issues associated with these issues.

We seek the representative voices of Indigenous peoples whose present-day identity and ancestral history are embedded in the land, along with the full diversity of cultures and ethnicities that make up the country’s population. We pledge to work in collaboration with individuals and organizations to respect and honor diverse cultural perspectives of public lands.

Fostering diversity and inclusiveness is an ongoing process requiring continuous awareness and diligence. Diversity is not a project or task with an end point.

Broads identify, engage, invest in, and listen to partners and community leaders as we work towards a more representative and inclusive conservation movement, and make choices consistent with those investments.

When working in new communities, we work to gain full understanding of issues facing those communities; and we are mindful of those issues, our potential impacts, and the need to follow through on clear commitments.



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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (Cont.)

We will integrate diversity and inclusiveness awareness throughout our programs and organizational structure. We work to create an environment in which all feel valued and respected, where learning and integrity are fostered, and laughter and fun are appreciated.