



2006 Annual Report

ForestWatch is a local, community-based nonprofit organization working to protect and restore the natural and cultural heritage of the Los Padres National Forest and other public lands along California's Central Coast through innovative field work, scientific collaboration, and legal advocacy.



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From the Executive Director and Board President

In 2006, **Los Padres ForestWatch** was at the center of nearly every key battle to preserve public lands along California's Central Coast. While only in our second year, ForestWatch continued to grow, delivering key victories that kept our local forests, rivers, wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, and communities intact.

Demonstrating the ongoing effectiveness of citizen participation, we worked with rural landowners to protect more than 10,000 acres from being auctioned off to the oil industry in the remote **Cuyama Valley**, and challenged another plan to expand oil drilling across more than 52,000 acres of the Los Padres – a plan that would produce less than a day's supply of oil at great cost to our region's wild places.

We protected **Figueroa Mountain** from a lawless logging proposal, convincing the Forest Service to significantly scale back the project. ForestWatch secured protections for the large old-growth trees that make this area unique, setting a precedent for similar proposals across the forest.

Our successes also extended into the **Carrizo Plain National Monument**, where we halted an oil tycoon's proposal to drill for oil inside the national monument, protecting thousands of acres from future oil development. ForestWatch was also instrumental in urging the federal government to include better science and public input in the long-term visioning process for the monument.

And we **ensured accountability** from federal land management agencies, actively participating in the decision-making process and improving the way these agencies manage the public's lands. In 2006, we tracked more than twenty projects, submitted fifteen comment letters and thirteen formal information requests, and filed five appeals and, as a last resort, four strategic lawsuits to uphold our nation's environmental protection laws when the agencies refused to do so.

Day after day, ForestWatch worked to protect and restore the region's local forestlands, acting as **the eyes and ears of the forest** and spending countless hours in the field, documenting the environmental damage that occurs during times of dwindling budgets, unfriendly politics, and bureaucratic oversight.

Thanks to your support, we were able to deliver these key victories. Our members are the lifeblood of our organization, and during 2006, ForestWatch grew to more than five hundred members and supporters from every community surrounding the forest...and beyond! In a short amount of time, ForestWatch has quickly established itself as one of the region's premier conservation forces.

As we look back over the year, we remain committed to our unique role in the protection of our local backcountry. **We are in it for the long haul.** You can count on us continuing our efforts in 2007 and beyond.

As always, your loyal and generous support allows us to serve as a powerful and independent advocate on behalf of the wild forests, free-flowing rivers, rolling grasslands, arid deserts, and the creatures that inhabit these wondrous places. We appreciate your confidence in our efforts to protect and restore our beautiful backcountry

Jeff Kuyper

Michael Summers

Protecting Wildlife and Wild Places from Runaway Oil Development

In 2006, ForestWatch continued efforts to protect our region's national treasures from an influx of oil development. After the U.S. Forest Service approved a plan to double the amount of oil development in the Los Padres National Forest, we were the only local organization to take a stand, filing a one-hundred page appeal. Alarming, the plan allowed drilling to come dangerously close to four wilderness areas, a wildlife refuge, and a sanctuary set aside to protect the California condor—one of the world's most endangered birds. Our challenge served as the last line of defense



Photograph by: Daniel Bianchi

against such senseless development, setting the stage for an eventual legal showdown to permanently protect some of the forest's most precious wild places.

ForestWatch also prevented attempts by an oil tycoon to drill an exploratory well at the base of the Caliente Range inside the Carrizo Plain National Monument, adjacent to the national forest in San Luis Obispo County. The drilling company quietly withdrew its plans, and eventually, the oil lease expired. If drilling had proceeded, the lease-holder could have eventually developed all 3,500 acres in the area. For now, these lands are safe from development.



Working With Rural Communities

ForestWatch and rural landowners in the Cuyama Valley celebrated a tremendous victory in 2006, protecting more than 10,000 remote acres from a controversial oil lease sale. The federal government had auctioned these leases to oil companies for as little as \$2 per acre, and didn't even take the courtesy of notifying nearby landowners. ForestWatch took charge and alerted dozens of affected landowners. "The prospect of oil rigs, pipelines and roads tearing up the landscape is devastating," explained one resident. "If it weren't for ForestWatch, I wouldn't have known about it," said another.



Along with pressure from landowners, our compelling scientific and legal concerns forced the agency to ultimately remove the controversial leases from the auction block. We held these agencies accountable, saving the frontiers of some of our region's most spectacular natural treasures.

Protecting Coastal Wilderness and Wild Rivers

More than a thousand miles of pristine mountain streams flow through the Los Padres National Forest, providing important habitat and a source of clean water for local communities. ForestWatch worked in 2006 to ensure that these rivers remained clean and free-flowing. We successfully challenged an oil company proposal to pump more than three million gallons of water per year from the watershed of Sespe Creek, a Congressionally-protected Wild & Scenic River. We also defeated a back-door attempt to give away nearly one mile of Piru Creek—which the Forest Service has recommended



Photograph by Brad Meyers



Photograph by Boon Hughey

for Wild & Scenic protection—to a local water district. The famed Big Sur coastline is the crown jewel of the northern Los Padres National Forest, stretching along some of the state's most dramatic and rugged shoreline. It's also the site of eight commercial livestock grazing allotments, and in 2006, ForestWatch joined a multi-year effort aimed at bringing one of these areas—called the Kozy Kove—into compliance with the federal Wilderness Act of 1964.

Safeguarding Our Local Forests

In a precedent-setting decision, ForestWatch last year convinced officials to dramatically scale back a logging plan for Figueroa Mountain in Santa Barbara County. Under the guise of “wildfire protection,” the Forest Service proposed cutting more than 80% of the trees on Figueroa Mountain, including trees up to thirty inches in diameter—trees so big that two people holding hands could barely wrap their arms around the trunk. Even worse, officials nearly approved the project without preparing an environmental assessment—an important study that was required by law.



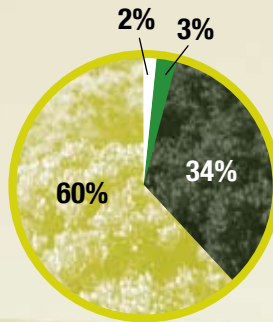
Because of pressure from ForestWatch and our supporters, the agency agreed to consider an alternative plan. Our alternative prohibited removing any trees larger than twelve inches in diameter, half of the size of the original proposal. During the public comment period, we encouraged more than 78 concerned citizens—including environmentalists, former firefighters, nearby cabin owners, and others—to ask officials to scale back the project.

The Forest Service ultimately agreed to adopt our strict limits, and to incorporate other protections as well. What began as a plan to cut trees “of all ages and sizes” without any environmental assessment, now benefits from a study and dozens of protective measures, setting a precedent for five other thinning projects. ForestWatch will continue to demand strong protections for our local forests.

2006 Financial Report

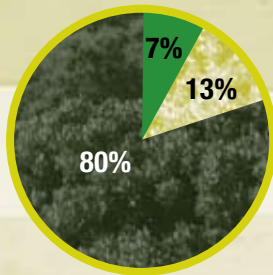
Income Sources

Donations and Membership – **60%**
Foundation Grants – **34%**
Recaptured Court Costs – **3%**
Miscellaneous – **2%**



Expenses

Program – **80%**
Administration – **7%**
Fundraising – **13%**



Income Sources

Donations and Membership	\$46,478.19
Foundation Grants	\$26,700.00
Recaptured Court Costs	\$2,484.00
Miscellaneous	\$1,917.25
Total 2006 Income	<u>\$77,579.44</u>

Salmon Run

In November 2006, more than three hundred runners and walkers participated in the 13th Annual Salmon Run at Patagonia World Headquarters in Ventura, making it one of the largest and most successful events to date. Patagonia donated all proceeds from the event—more than \$10,000—to ForestWatch, supporting our forest protection efforts!



Photograph by: Jim Little

Donors

The Board and staff of Los Padres ForestWatch gratefully acknowledge the donors listed here who contributed gifts of \$20 or more to our work in 2006. Your support strengthened our ability to protect and restore our local wild places.

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We have made the listing of our donors as accurate and complete as possible. If you find an error, please accept our apologies and contact Jeff Kuyper, Executive Director at (805) 617-4610 so that we can correct our records.

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We appreciate the support of the following organizations and businesses who joined our Forest Trade Council in 2006 with a donation of \$200 or more:

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 Earthworks Rock Climbing School – Ventura
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You Can Help Protect Our Local Forest!

Your tax-deductible contribution to ForestWatch helps us protect the wildlife, rivers, mountains, and rugged landscapes of the Los Padres National Forest and other public lands along California's Central Coast.

Please do your part to insure that we can continue our work to protect these lands and nearby communities from irresponsible and irreversible environmental decisions. Visit us at www.LPFW.org for an easy and "tree free" way to support Los Padres ForestWatch.

You can also make a gift to support the work of Los Padres ForestWatch in these additional ways:

Matching Gifts

Members of Los Padres ForestWatch can make their contributions go even farther through matching gifts. Many employers match charitable contributions and some double or triple your initial gift.

Memorial and Tribute Gifts

Honor someone's life or a special occasion by making an honorary or memorial gift to Los Padres ForestWatch in the name of a friend or family member.

Join our Wildland Partners Program

Making regular contributions to Los Padres ForestWatch through monthly or quarterly contributions allows us to save the costs of solicitation mailings and invites you to play a key role in protecting and conserving our local forest. You can make monthly gifts by credit card or electronic funds transfer.

Trustees of the Forest

Our major donor society, Trustees of the Forest, honors those donors who play a significant role in insuring that we can protect the Los Padres and its wildlands, wildlife, and communities. Membership is extended to donors who contribute \$1,000 or more annually in unrestricted gifts to Los Padres ForestWatch. Benefits include regular updates on our work and invitations to special events.

Forest Trade Council

Our Forest Trade Council is an alliance of select local businesses that recognize the link between a healthy forest and a sustainable economy, contributing \$200 or more annually. Several of our Council members are also participants in the 1% for the Planet program, a nationwide coalition of businesses who agree to donate one percent of their profits to conservation efforts each year. Contact ForestWatch to learn how your business can earn valuable recognition in the Council or the 1% FTP program.

Los Padres ForestWatch
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Santa Barbara, CA 93102
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www.LPFW.org



Photograph by: Ray Ford



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