



2007 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

Change is constantly afoot in the Los Padres National Forest, revealed not just by events like last year's wildfires but also by the more subtle changing of the seasons. Winter storms bring life to mountain streams, and occasional dustings of snow are followed by vibrant displays of spring wildflowers, giving way to the golden hillsides of summer. And as canyons turn to colorful autumn foliage, the stage is set for the cycle of seasons to begin again.

While these natural wonders unfolded in 2007, we continued our important work to protect wildlife habitat, wilderness landscapes, and pristine mountain streams from the threat of development and resource extraction. For the third year in a row, ForestWatch served as the **leading voice calling for the preservation of our region's backcountry**.

Perhaps the greatest threat facing our local wild places is runaway oil development, and in 2007 ForestWatch filed a legal challenge against a plan that would allow oil companies to expand their development across several thousand acres of the Los Padres. Our diligent efforts have protected the forest from any oil development expansion for three years running, and your support gives us hope that this year we can put this ill-conceived plan to rest for good.

We also **demand accountability from the oil industry** after a disastrous oil spill coated three miles of mountain stream. Elsewhere, we **worked with rural landowners** in San Luis Obispo County's Upper Lopez Canyon to prevent an oil speculator from ruining this pristine canyon adjacent to the Santa Lucia Wilderness.

Last year also brought the **first commercial timber sale in the Los Padres in decades** – a salvage logging proposal in an area that's just beginning to recover from the effects of wildfire. We are hopeful that, **with your continued support, we will be able to protect these special places for good in 2008**.

In addition to our cutting-edge advocacy efforts, our team of dedicated volunteers removed several hundred pounds of trash from wildlife habitat, preventing endangered California condors from feeding it to their young. Your support laid the groundwork for our volunteer habitat restoration program and this year it will continue to grow, furthering our mission of protecting and restoring our public lands.

As we celebrated our third anniversary, we reached several exciting milestones in our organization, moving into much-needed office space, hiring a second full-time staff person to accommodate our expanding workload, and organizing exciting membership events, all while **continuing to deliver key victories for our local backcountry**. These changes will allow us to build on our successful track record while remaining true to our mission.

Our mission — which we share with you and countless other conservationists, outdoorspeople, rural landowners, and government and local business leaders — is to protect and restore the natural heritage of our local backcountry, **from the Big Sur coast to the Sespe Wilderness**.

As we look back over the year, we couldn't have done it without you, our key supporters, who appreciate both the natural wonders of this spectacular region as well as the important work that we do day after day. Last year we faced daunting challenges on many fronts, and this year is no different. Our achievements provide us with reason for hope as we continue our work this year and beyond.

The fate of our local backcountry is at a critical crossroads. But with your support and confidence in our work, we made a difference last year and we're firmly committed to continuing our role as stewards of our local backcountry. You and I are fortunate to live in this most wonderful part of the world, and we're fortunate to have you as a friend, supporter, and colleague. Thank you.

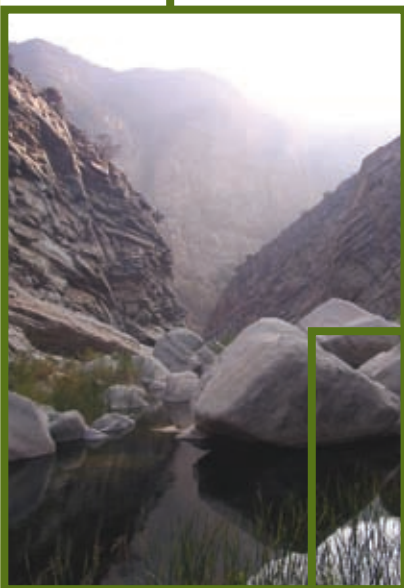
Brad Monsma
President

Jeff Kuyper
Executive Director

Protecting Wildlife and Wild Places from Run-away Oil Development

The Los Padres National Forest contains some of our state's most pristine wild places, but it's also the only forest in California with oil development, creating challenging conflicts with sometimes tragic consequences.

Disaster struck the Sespe Creek watershed early in 2007 after a large spill of oil and wastewater fouled more than three miles of mountain stream. Our investigation revealed that this was not an isolated incident – nearly a dozen spills had occurred in this same area during the last few years. With your support we're demanding that the oil industry clean up its act or face penalties under the federal Clean Water Act.



Photograph by: Brad Morsma



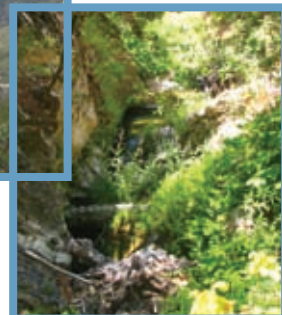
The spill revealed the dangers of allowing oil drilling to expand even further into ecologically sensitive areas of the forest. A plan approved three years ago would do just that, doubling the amount of oil development allowed on the Los Padres. This would ruin scenic vistas, imperil wildlife habitat, pollute the air, and increase the risk of even more spills – all for less than a day's supply of oil.

Heeding the lessons of the 2007 oil spill, we took the important step of challenging this oil drilling expansion plan in federal court. While this case is pending, ForestWatch continues to take the lead in protecting our local backcountry from expanded oil development. Our efforts have paid off, with no new drilling occurring on the Los Padres or the adjacent Carrizo Plain National Monument for three solid years...and counting.

Working With Rural Communities

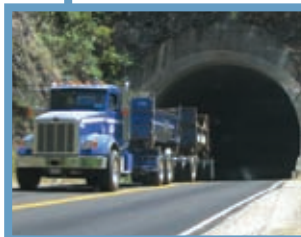
Last year also brought about several other attempts to drill for oil along the frontiers of our region's most spectacular wild places. An oil speculator began knocking on doors in the remote Upper Lopez Canyon in San

Luis Obispo County, and landowners contacted



ForestWatch for assistance. Our efforts brought together the residents in the canyon, telling the oil companies with a unified voice that drilling was not acceptable in this remote area along the boundary of the Santa Lucia Wilderness.

Also in 2007, several sand and gravel mines in the Cuyama Valley sought permission to expand their operations, potentially sending hundreds of gravel trucks through the heart of the Los Padres National Forest. This narrow, winding mountain road is a



State Scenic Highway and a National Forest Scenic Byway, and a popular access route used by forest visitors. ForestWatch – in coordination with residents in the Ojai and Cuyama valleys – launched a program to protect this

scenic highway from excessive truck traffic, organizing town meetings and encouraging more than three hundred concerned citizens to write letters to decision makers and attend public hearings. At these hearings, ForestWatch presented evidence showing dozens of collisions caused by gravel trucks driving recklessly on this dangerous road. With additional public hearings scheduled for this year, we'll continue to protect the heart of the Los Padres from becoming an industrial trucking route.

Preserving Our Local Forests

The Los Padres National Forest has not supported a commercial timber program for decades, demonstrating that a national forest can be successfully managed without commercial exploitation. But last year, logging companies pressured officials to authorize an intensive salvage logging operation where the effects would be devastating – a burn area just beginning to heal from the effects of a recent wildfire.

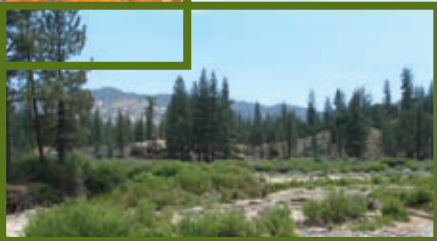
ForestWatch was the only local organization to stand up to these logging companies and demand that this cycle of post-fire recovery be allowed to unfold with as little disruption as possible. Recent studies show that salvage logging can seriously hinder the recovery of burned areas, with heavy machinery causing long-term damage to soils and wildlife.

In 2007 we served as the voice for the forest, attending official field trips, submitting

detailed comment letters, and spending countless hours inspecting the trees that were marked for logging. And what we found was alarming – more than 20% of the marked trees had survived the fire and did not meet the agency's own criteria for removal.

ForestWatch promoted an alternative proposal – cutting down any trees that presented a public safety hazard along roads and trails, and leaving them in place to provide soil nutrients and wildlife habitat. But officials rejected our proposal and approved the logging without even preparing an environmental assessment, setting the stage for a legal showdown in federal court.

With the support of our members, we're doing everything we can to protect this fragile area as new signs of life emerge after the fire.



Restoring Our Natural Heritage

The California condor is an icon of the Los Padres wilderness, soaring along mountaintop ridges just as it did during prehistoric times. But with its numbers dwindling, the condor has been the subject of one of the most intensive recovery efforts in our nation's history. The Los Padres lies at the heart



Photograph by: Daniel Blanchetta

of efforts to recover this magnificent bird from the brink of extinction.



In 2007, ForestWatch volunteers joined in this recovery effort to tackle a very small problem with very big impacts – microtrash. Microtrash includes bottle caps, rags, screws, bullet shells, glass, and other small bits of debris. Condors, curious by nature, are attracted to microtrash and bring it back to their nests, where their chicks swallow the small pieces. Several condors have died or required surgery after ingesting too much microtrash, making this one of the leading threats to the survival of condors.

Our volunteers in 2007 removed hundreds of pounds of trash near the Sespe Wilderness, laying the groundwork to expand our habitat restoration projects to include other microtrash sites as well as the removal of tamarisk – an invasive plant that wreaks havoc on aquatic ecosystems – from the Sisquoc River watershed.



Photograph by: Ray Ford

We thank our volunteers for the critical role they play in achieving our mission of protecting and restoring our wildlife and wild places.

Salmon Run

In November 2007, more than four hundred runners and walkers participated in the 14th Annual Salmon Run at Patagonia World Headquarters in Ventura. For the second year in a row, Patagonia donated all proceeds from the event – more than \$12,000 – to ForestWatch, making this the most successful Salmon Run ever!



Photograph by: Jim Little

Wilco Concert



Photograph by: Mary Ellen Matthews

The Grammy award-winning rock band Wilco raised nearly \$1,000 for ForestWatch while performing at the Santa Barbara Bowl in August 2007.

Building Support in 2008

Last year's events paved the way for even more membership activities in 2008, like our *Ojai Wild!* creekside barbeque at Thacher School, a summertime TGIF happy hour in



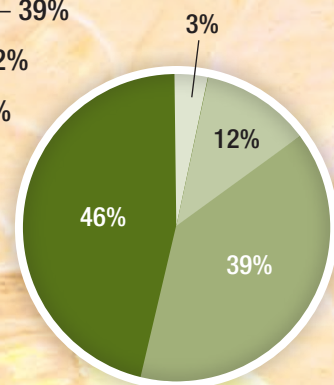
Ojai Wild! photographs by: Brett Millar

a downtown Santa Barbara courtyard, a benefit art exhibition by The Oak Group, and a *Wild & Scenic Film Festival* in San Luis Obispo.

2007 Financial Report

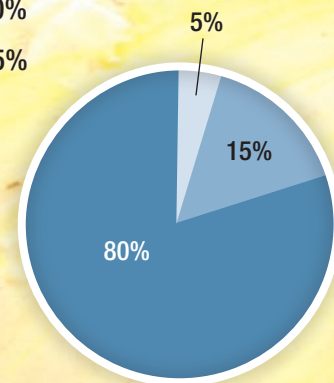
Support & Revenue

Memberships & Donations – 46%
Foundation Grants – 39%
Special Events – 12%
Miscellaneous – 3%



Expenses by Program

Programs, Services & Advocacy – 80%
Administration – 15%
Fundraising – 5%



Total 2007 Income: \$127,294

Membership & Donations – \$58,590
Foundation Grants – \$49,800
Special Events – \$14,684
Miscellaneous – \$4,220

Total 2007 Expenses: \$107,062

Programs, Services & Advocacy – \$85,125
Administrative Support – \$16,380
Fundraising Support – \$5,557

Our 2007 Contributors

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 2007. Your support strengthened our ability to protect and restore our local wild places.

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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 ensure 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 ensuring 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.



Photograph by: David Powdrell



Photograph by: Boon Hughey

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.



Photograph by: Michael Hansen

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