



Shaping
the future
of wilderness,
together.



2025 Annual Report

In 2025, WILD brought people together around the world to protect wild places, restore nature, and build a healthier future for people and the planet.

From global policy to grassroots leadership, this year demonstrated a simple truth: lasting conservation happens when people work together in relationship with one another and with nature.

“It all comes down to Mother Earth. She is healing and all of her animals need protection.”

HENRY QUICK BEAR SR. (LAKOTA)

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The Year in Review

Growth, Reach, and Real-World Impact

2025 marked a year of significant momentum for WILD. A year of expanding our global reach, strengthening our programs, and deepening the connection between people and nature.

Following the 12th [World Wilderness Congress](#) in August 2024, WILD experienced a surge in engagement and visibility. This moment transformed awareness into action, bringing new audiences into our work and demonstrating the real-world impact of our mission.

At the same time, our programs and partnerships advanced across multiple fronts:

- Youth leadership reached record participation levels.
- Indigenous-led stewardship advanced through work in the Amazon, Sápmi, and global conservation spaces.
- Policy initiatives carried WILD12 objectives to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress and helped shape global conservation priorities.
- Grassroots and community-led projects supported conservation, restoration, food sovereignty, and cultural continuity.
- Global and regional networks strengthened collaboration across borders and institutions.

Across every level, WILD continued connecting global policy, national and local leadership, and on-the-ground action for wilderness.

“If we were to lose our ability to connect with wild nature, we’d lose a part of who we are as a species.”

DAN ABBE, YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK,
VOICES OF WILDERNESS EPISODE 53



Letter from Leadership

Each year, WILD’s work is carried forward by people who continue to show up for wild nature. In 2025, we saw that commitment in many forms: communities caring for land, water, and wildlife; young leaders stepping forward; partners finding common ground through complex policy negotiations; and Indigenous Peoples and local communities sharing knowledge, leadership, and stewardship both on the ground and in global conversations.

Some of the most meaningful moments of the year were deeply personal. We traveled to the Yawanawá Territory in Brazil to celebrate with the community the certification of 18 Yawanawá eco-guards. The celebration honored the community’s determination to advance its vision despite flooding, climate impacts, and the many challenges of bringing this work to life. The eco-guards are helping monitor and protect Yawanawá Territory, bringing together practical tools, community knowledge, and a deep commitment to caring for land, life, and future generations.

We also witnessed a new generation of conservation leaders within WILD and across our wider community work tirelessly to advance international policy at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. We are proud of their effort, their willingness to adapt, and the care they brought to their work. These moments remind us that conservation is built through trust, persistence, and shared purpose over time.

For more than fifty years, WILD has been honored to serve as a global convener and partner within the wilderness community. We continue to build on that legacy by helping people and partners come together, sustain trusted relationships, and move shared vision into practical action for wild nature.

We hope this report offers a meaningful look at the collective action WILD helped advance in 2025, and the many hands and relationships that made it possible.

To our global community, donors, partners, and advisors: thank you. Your trust and support sustain this work. Because of you, WILD can continue helping people around the world come together — and persist — for wilderness.

With gratitude,

JENNIFER MEYER AND ADAM HANSON



The WILD Way

WILD envisions a wild and healthy world in which people and nature flourish together; a future where intact ecosystems support life on Earth and human communities thrive alongside them.

To achieve this, WILD works across cultures, borders, and systems, bringing together governments, Indigenous leaders, organizations, and communities to protect and restore wilderness while meeting the needs of people.

This work is intentionally structured across interconnected levels from global policy and international networks, to national institutions and coalitions, to grassroots and Indigenous-led initiatives on the ground. By operating across this full spectrum, WILD is able to advance large-scale conservation policy, strengthen leadership and collaboration across regions, and support community-driven solutions that deliver lasting protection for wild nature.

At its core, WILD's approach is rooted in collaboration and collective impact because the protection of Earth's wild places depends not on isolated efforts, but on unified action that connects people and nature at every level.

Our 2025 Impact

Global Policy and Movement Building

A Global Leadership Moment

WILD played a leading role in advancing global conservation policy priorities at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Abu Dhabi, one of the world's leading forums for conservation policy, science, and practice.

This moment was years in the making.

At WILD12 in 2024, delegates adopted twelve resolutions outlining shared priorities for wilderness. Drawing on many of those resolutions, WILD worked with global partners to develop six policy proposals (motions) and submitted them to IUCN in January 2025.

In the months leading up to the IUCN Congress, WILD:

- **Participated in negotiations to help strengthen and shape policy language**
- **Mobilized public awareness through strategic communications and storytelling**
- **Built coalitions of support among governments, NGOs, Indigenous leaders, young leaders, and conservation organizations**

In October 2025, WILD brought a strong delegation to the Congress to advocate for these motions directly on the global stage.

The result: IUCN members adopted all six as official IUCN Resolutions.

So, why does this matter?

IUCN Resolutions help shape conservation goals worldwide. Through this work, WILD advanced priorities connected to wilderness protection, Indigenous leadership, youth empowerment, mentorship, sacred natural sites, rights-based conservation, and effective and equitable protected and conserved areas.

The adopted resolutions provide important tools for continued advocacy and partnership. They also show how ideas developed through the World Wilderness Congress can move into global conservation policy spaces and support practical action over time.

Explore the six WILD-led IUCN Resolutions adopted in 2025:

- [Advancing the IUCN Green List Standard of protected and conserved areas to enhance effective and equitable in situ conservation](#)
- [Setting area-based targets on scientific evidence and reversing historic injustices](#)
- [Mainstreaming mentorship for young ecological stewards to enhance conservation efforts](#)
- [Scaling-up Indigenous leadership in the protection of nature and the sacred](#)
- [Accelerating equitable youth empowerment and engagement across the Union](#)
- [Protecting the Sápmi forest: safeguarding biodiversity and Indigenous livelihoods](#)



“We’re building more equitable relationships and more equitable societies. So we want to build respect for people’s perspectives, cultures, and ways of being. And for many Indigenous Peoples and others, that includes recognizing that sacred sites and spirituality are critically important dimensions for the fulfillment of a human life.”

GWEN BRIDGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST AND CONSERVATION
ADVOCATE OF THE SADDLE LAKE CREE NATION



Investing in the Next Generation

CoalitionWILD

In 2025, CoalitionWILD continued investing in the next generation of conservation leaders, equipping them with the skills, networks, and confidence needed to drive meaningful change. The EXCEerator program welcomed 45 new graduates from 28 countries into its growing global community of youth-led projects, while the Global Mentorship Program reached its largest cohort to date with 178 participants, connecting emerging leaders with experienced conservation practitioners across regions and disciplines.

This momentum extended beyond individual programs to the global stage, where CoalitionWILD successfully developed and advocated for the [IUCN Resolution: Mainstreaming mentorship for young ecological stewards to enhance conservation efforts.](#) Adopted by IUCN Members, the resolution marks an important step toward embedding mentorship as a core strategy within conservation organizations and networks worldwide.

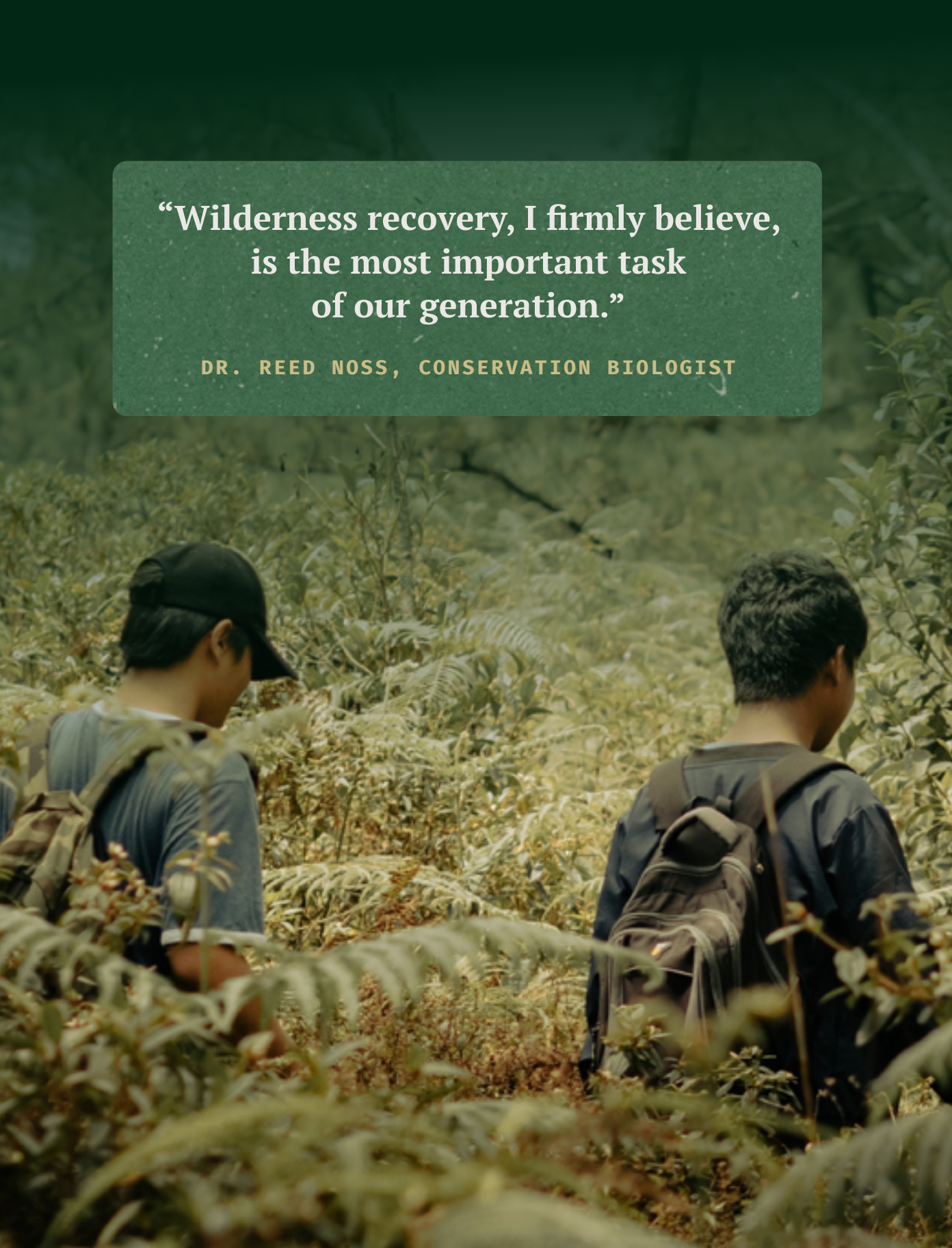
Together, these efforts are helping build a model of conservation leadership that is intergenerational, globally connected, and designed for long-term impact, ensuring that the people shaping the future of conservation are prepared to meet its greatest challenges.

“Conservation leadership is not just about having ideas, it is about shaping them into actionable projects that create change.”

Abdou-Wakilou Bio Keri,
2025 EXCEerator Program Participant

“Wilderness recovery, I firmly believe,
is the most important task
of our generation.”

DR. REED NOSS, CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST



On the Ground

Mali Elephant Landscapes (formerly Mali Elephant Project)

In one of the most complex and challenging conservation environments in the world, WILD continues to support long-term, integrated solutions that protect both wildlife and the communities who depend on these ecosystems.

In 2025, this work focused on strengthening institutional capacity and developing a five-year strategic plan to support the program’s long-term sustainability. Achievements included continued support for eco-guards conducting on-the-ground data collection, advocacy for governance reforms that improve natural resource management, and ongoing land restoration initiatives aimed at rebuilding degraded ecosystems.

Rainforest Lifeways: Supporting Yawanawá-led Stewardship

The Yawanawá Territory lies within Brazil’s western Amazon, one of the most ecologically and culturally significant regions on Earth. Its forests sustain extraordinary biodiversity, store carbon, and help regulate the global climate.

Through Rainforest Lifeways, WILD supports Yawanawá leaders as they carry out their Life Plan—the community’s vision for protecting their Territory, sustaining their culture, and building a strong future for generations to come.

In 2025, the Yawanawá established a 13-acre permaculture system to grow more of their own food while sustaining traditional knowledge and practices. They also launched their first Eco-Guard training initiative, preparing 18 community members to monitor and protect the Territory through four patrol units.

These achievements strengthened Yawanawá-led governance and expanded the partnerships supporting the community’s long-term stewardship of its Territory.



Hear from Tashka and the Rangers [here](#)

“For us to watch the territory, take care of the well-being of our land, it is our collective responsibility, all of the Yawanawá. But it is up to the younger ones, who will be able to do the intensive work, to take care, protect, and map our territory. When we protect the environment, we also protect our spirituality which forever lies on this land with our ancestors.”

CHIEF TASHKA YAWANAWÁ

WILD Sápmi: Supporting Sámi Stewardship, Forest Protection, and Indigenous Rights

Working in close partnership with Sámi reindeer herding communities, WILD Sápmi supports efforts addressing the growing pressures of industrial extraction on Indigenous lands and lifeways in northern Europe - from forestry and mining to infrastructure and wind energy. In 2025, this work reached a significant milestone with the successful adoption of [IUCN Resolution Protecting the Sápmi forest: safeguarding biodiversity and Indigenous livelihoods](#), elevating global recognition of the need to protect Sápmi’s forests and safeguard Indigenous livelihoods.

At the same time, the program made important strides on the ground, including the development of data-driven tools designed to strengthen Indigenous advocacy in land-use negotiations. Together, these efforts represent a powerful model of Indigenous-led conservation: one that operates at the intersection of local knowledge and global policy, and shows how lasting environmental protection is strengthened through the leadership of those most closely connected to the land.

Across Borders

North American Intergovernmental Committee on Cooperation for Protected and Conserved Areas (NAPA)

For 15 years, WILD has proudly provided facilitation, coordination, and continuity for NAPA's cooperation among land management agencies across Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Guided by the objectives of the renewed 2023 Memorandum of Understanding, WILD coordinated and facilitated 12 NAPA virtual meetings of its Steering Committee and Coordinating Group, helping strengthen communication, technical exchange, and continental-scale conservation coordination.

Throughout the year, NAPA participants shared knowledge on key conservation challenges and emerging practices, including bioacoustics monitoring, wildfire management, invasive species detection, and sustainable community-based conservation. Virtual workshops brought together technical experts and leaders from all participating agencies to exchange approaches and strengthen trinational collaboration.

A major milestone in 2025 was the finalization of NAPA's Operational Procedures, establishing a stronger governance foundation for long-term cooperation.

NAPA continues to demonstrate the importance of long-term conservation cooperation across borders and institutions.

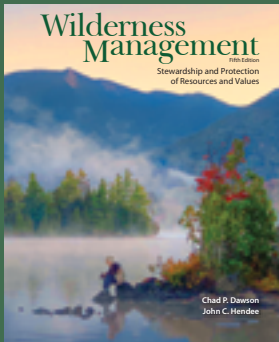
U.S.–Germany Partnership on Wilderness

In 2025, WILD agreed to provide facilitation support and partner with the U.S.–Germany Partnership on Wilderness, an effort that grew from conversations at the 12th World Wilderness Congress. The partnership brings together U.S. and German wilderness experts to exchange knowledge through webinars, case studies, research, and peer learning focused on wilderness stewardship, restoration and rewilding, management capacity, public engagement, and shared challenges such as recreation, wildfire, and invasive species.

Throughout the year, the partnership hosted five webinars and met regularly to exchange ideas, strengthen relationships, and support continued cooperation between U.S. and German wilderness practitioners.

Sharing Wilderness Knowledge

Protecting wilderness also depends on sharing knowledge across generations, disciplines, and geographies.



Wilderness Management: Stewardship and Protection of Resources and Values (Fifth Edition)

In 2025, WILD supported efforts connected to the publication of Wilderness Management: Stewardship and Protection of Resources and Values (Fifth Edition), continuing a long-standing relationship with the textbook across its previous editions. The book helps students, practitioners, and protected area professionals better understand and care for wilderness resources and values. WILD is honored to serve as the beneficiary of book sales, helping direct support back into wilderness conservation.



International Journal of Wilderness

The International Journal of Wilderness also continued its role as a leading platform for wilderness research, stewardship, field experience, and conservation dialogue. For more than three decades, IJW has shared research, perspectives, and conservation thought from practitioners, Indigenous leaders, researchers, and protected area professionals around the world. Explore recent articles and the journal archive at [IJW.org](https://www.ijw.org).

A Wider Circle of Support

WILD’s support for conservation takes many forms. In some cases, WILD provides direct project support. In others, we provide fiscal sponsorship, partnership, convening, communications, administrative assistance, or strategic support that helps trusted partners and aligned efforts move important work forward.

In 2025, this wider circle of support helped advance efforts such as:

- Sustainable fishing practices in Lake Jipe, Kenya, as well as a beekeeping pilot project.
- Indigenous-led grassland restoration and buffalo rematriation efforts.
- The launch of the Economic Futures Summit, a first-of-its-kind Indigenous-led gathering focused on sustainability solutions, climate and nature challenges, and new economic pathways.
- Storytelling efforts through art and film about corridor protection, relationship to the land, wildlife, and more.
- A community garden on the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota, honoring tiospaye-led efforts – traditional Lakota extended-family leadership– and supporting food sovereignty.
- The Global Rewilding Alliance, helping connect a worldwide movement to restore wild lands and seas and bring nature back at scale.



Your Support Shapes What Comes Next

WILD brings people together from around the world to strengthen the relationships, leadership, stewardship, and action needed for wilderness.

In 2025, your support helped WILD advance conservation on the ground, invest in emerging leaders, support Indigenous and community-led stewardship, and carry wilderness priorities into international policy spaces.

Your support makes this possible. When you support WILD, you are not standing on the sidelines of conservation. You are helping sustain the people, relationships, and wild places that make long-term protection possible.

Together, we can continue helping people around the world come together — and take action — for wilderness.



SHAPE THE FUTURE OF WILDERNESS.

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Fiscal Year 2025

Revenue:

Primary - **\$5,542,279**
Other - **\$439,151**

Total Revenue - \$5,981,430

Expenses:

Programs - **\$6,223,027**
Administrative and Fundraising - **\$303,596**

Total Functioning Expenses - \$6,526,623



Donors

To our generous wild friends, thank you!

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**"If working apart we are a force
powerful to destabilize our planet,
surely working together we are
powerful enough to save it."**

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH





WILD

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