

# JACKSON HOLE CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

*Annual Report FY 2008 • Message to Our Members*



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As 2008 comes to an end, I find myself in the very conflicted position of saying goodbye to the many friends I've made while working for the Conservation Alliance and sharing with you the accomplishments of this past year – the reasons we all give so much to this organization.

As you can see from our list of accomplishments on the next page, much of what we can celebrate is what didn't happen. For example, we partnered with a wide array of valley residents to bring a halt to an ill-conceived, sprawling development at the south end of South Park. Along with other conservation partners, we prevailed in federal court to save the lives of hundreds of wolves that were in danger under poor state management plans.

After years of building community support for the Path of the Pronghorn, the corridor was formally recognized through a joint proclamation this summer by the Forest Service, National Park Service, National Elk Refuge, Bureau of Land Management and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. The agencies vowed to keep the corridor safe from developments and obstructions. And finally, with your generous support, we were fortunate to end this past fiscal year with only a slight deficit in our operations budget. But what will the current fiscal year bring?

I cannot ignore the economic turmoil facing all of us. With record numbers of multinational corporations filing for bankruptcy, enormous stock market plunges and bank failures, we can't view our future – yours or that of the Conservation Alliance – as optimistically as we did just a year ago. Fortunately, because of years of unwavering member support and the hard work of our Board of

Directors and staff, this organization has built a modest armament – one we hope will help us withstand the current upheaval in the economy. However, like any armor, it alone cannot guarantee survival; it will take the combined effort of everyone who cares for this valley to make sure the Conservation Alliance remains a strong and effective force for conservation and responsible planning in this valley. The board and staff will do their part by tightening the organizational belt and discovering creative new ways to keep the successes flowing.




The Conservation Alliance guards against the weakening of environmental laws and planning regulations in the name of short-term economic stimuli, and instead promotes long-term solutions that are healthy for the community and the economy. We must continue our role as

one of the most respected defenders of responsible land stewardship on private and public lands in the region. We must remain focused on the issues while not losing sight of the big picture – that this is one of the most unique places in the world, and it will remain so only if all the pieces remain healthy and are able to interact in harmony with minimal human intervention.

Although I am leaving as the executive director of the Conservation Alliance, I will not leave this valley, and I will continue to support this great organization. I hope you will join me in this promise.

Thank you,

  
Franz J. Camenzind, Ph.D.

## Community planning

- The Conservation Alliance is actively engaged in the update of our community's **Comprehensive Plan**, to make sure it works to protect what makes Jackson Hole so unique. Throughout the past year, we've represented our membership at every stakeholder and public meeting, and submitted detailed recommendations on every draft, always advocating for responsible planning that recognizes that Jackson Hole is a critical part of an unparalleled ecosystem that includes some of the world's most cherished wildlife and wildlands.

Offering solutions is a big part of our focus. During the past year, we've shared our recent analysis of Teton County's Natural Resource Overlay zone with planners, electeds and the public to help inform the Comp Plan process. Through our "Next Steps" speaker series, with the help of The Community Foundation of Jackson Hole, Wildlife Conservation Society and Teton County Housing Authority, we've also brought in conservation and affordable housing experts from other communities to share the lessons they've learned.

We've also encouraged people to stand up for Jackson Hole through alerts, ads, our website, *Alliance News* magazine and monthly *Alliance Action* e-newsletter. We're gratified that valley citizens have said in each Comp Plan survey that protecting wildlife and their habitat is the community's top priority, followed by managing growth responsibly and housing our workforce.

- To help provide relief from development pressures that could otherwise compromise the Comp Plan process, the Conservation Alliance worked for a **temporary county moratorium on residential subdivisions**, which was enacted in May. We also formally asked for a moratorium on developments using the Town of Jackson's flawed **planned mixed-use development tool**, because it facilitates large-scale developments that don't mesh with our current Comprehensive Plan, or with the community's wishes recently voiced during the Comp Plan update process. While our call for this moratorium was unsuccessful, town officials did agree to discuss ways that the PMD tool could be modified to make sure it's working effectively and to provide more community benefit.

- Throughout 2008, the Conservation Alliance consistently presented a "big picture" view of **affordable housing** within the context of proactive, responsible land use planning. We've supported increased mitigation rates in the county and town; regulations to require higher percentages of affordable housing for density-option tools, such as planned unit developments for affordable housing; and improved rules to govern condo conversions in an effort to preserve affordable rentals.

- To sustain our unique community, the Conservation Alliance persistently **monitored, analyzed and commented on private land development proposals** ranging from Grand Targhee Resort to Teton Meadows Ranch, and we did the same for a gamut of proposals to amend land development regulations. Working closely with neighborhood groups, we've succeeded in **elevating citizen involvement in important land-use decisions**, as well as in the Comp Plan update, during this critical, pivotal time for Jackson Hole.

## Wildlife management

- This past summer, after years of building community support for the **Path of the Pronghorn**, we were elated when the Forest Service, National Park Service, National Elk Refuge, Bureau of Land Management and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department officially pledged to keep the corridor safe from development and obstructions.

- The Conservation Alliance worked diligently to **preserve Endangered Species Act protections for Northern Rockies gray wolves** in 2008. After the wolves were delisted in March, we helped lead a coalition that brought suit against that decision, resulting in reinstatement of protections in October and thus saving the lives of hundreds of wolves.

- In other wildlife issues ranging from **protecting the region's grizzlies, sage grouse and wolverines**, to **preventing the spread of disease** in Wyoming's iconic elk herds, the Conservation Alliance has been a strong proponent of using science to inform intelligent wildlife management decisions.

## Public lands

- The Alliance was a leading voice in the successful push to **keep the Bridger-Teton National Forest headquarters in Jackson**.

- Our input on the Bridger-Teton's **off-highway vehicle summer travel plan** was reflected in the plan's draft environmental impact statement this past summer, and it should help shape a final plan that will ensure better protection for wildlife and habitat in the north part of the forest, while still providing safe, sustainable access for recreationists, hunters and anglers.

- As part of our Forest Protection Campaign, the Alliance has continued to partner with local and regional groups, as well as elected officials, to promote pending federal legislation to **protect the Wyoming Range of the Bridger-Teton National Forest** from oil and gas drilling in sensitive wildlands. We've also supported legislation to **protect some 400 miles of the most pristine rivers and streams in the Snake River drainage** under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Both bills have been included in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act, which legislators have pledged to consider in January. Also, thanks to the generous support of the Harder Foundation, we've steadfastly participated in the on-again, off-again **Bridger-Teton forest management plan revision** process, which is expected to resume in 2009.

## Outreach

- Last but not least, the Conservation Alliance's great **educational programs, publications, campaigns, events, field trips and forums** have given our members and the community many opportunities to learn about the environmental issues affecting Jackson Hole, and to find out how they can have a say. Highlights include attendance by more than 300 people at each of our most popular events: Party for the Pronghorn and our Patagonia Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival in October.

# Big Shoes to Fill

## Search underway to replace Franz Camenzind as executive director

One of the most important goals of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance for 2009 is finding a successor for our longtime executive director, Franz Camenzind, who has announced he will retire in July.

After 12 years at the helm, Franz' passion, knowledge, history in the valley and unwavering dedication to the Conservation Alliance will be hard to match. That has led several supporters to ask us, "What's the Alliance going to do without Franz?"

We're grateful that Franz gave the board a year's lead time, so we're able to address the issue of his replacement in a thoughtful manner that takes into account the future of the organization. (Please visit [www.jhalliance.org/Library/PressReleases/FranzRetirement.JHCA7-08.pdf](http://www.jhalliance.org/Library/PressReleases/FranzRetirement.JHCA7-08.pdf) for additional information about Franz' retirement.)

Of course, Franz leaves quite a legacy. Yet in many ways, his retirement comes at a good time. The organization has a strong, stable staff composed of people with high levels of expertise and decades of local knowledge. The board's recent branding and organizational-values work allow us to move into the transition process steps ahead of most organizations with the same leadership-transition challenge.



As long-time members have seen, the Conservation Alliance has survived and thrived throughout several executive directors – seven in the 29-year history of the organization. With each new executive director, the organization grows in a different way, and remains a respected and effective advocate for Jackson Hole.

A task force, composed of current and former Conservation Alliance board members, has begun the search process for our new E.D. The task force is advertising the position, taking resumes and determining how we want Franz' replacement to fit into the structure and strategic future of the organization. We expect to begin narrowing the list after New Year's, which will give us plenty of time to conduct interviews, allow staff and board to meet candidates, and for the right candidate to make the transition from his or her current position.

If you have any input on the process, please let us know. You, our members, are the Alliance. We look forward to your continued support throughout 2009, as we make this leadership transition and move into our fourth decade of partnering for a wild and beautiful valley.

– Anthony Stevens, Board Co-Chair, Transition Task Force Chair

## Other goals for 2009 include...

- To keep working for a **strong Comp Plan**, one that clearly prioritizes our community's values of protecting wildlife and managing growth responsibly, and one that provides clear guidance and predictability for future planning decisions. Our next step will be making sure that the strategies to carry out the community's vision are effective. Through research, educational programs and community meetings, we'll continue to work with partners and neighborhood groups, and we'll keep encouraging citizens to stay involved. Together, we can **create a plan that respects and protects our community's character and irreplaceable scenic, wildlife and other natural resources.**
- To continue to advocate for responsible land use planning. We'll **be there to monitor and comment on private land development proposals** in the Town of Jackson and Teton County to ensure that they represent intelligent, responsible growth for our community.
- To work with community partners, through research and discussion, to find **viable solutions to the affordable housing problem** – solutions that won't compromise wildlife and landscape health.
- The community has voiced support for intensified land use in town, but only in trade for **permanently protecting wildlife habitat and open spaces** in the county. We'll keep working for policies to accomplish this.
- To persevere in **promoting science-based wildlife management policies** to: slow the spread of diseases (which have the potential to devastate Greater Yellowstone wildlife herds); and maintain the viability of threatened species like wolves and grizzlies.
- To continue efforts to ensure that the Bridger-Teton National Forest's travel and recreation planning process **preserves roadless areas and minimizes off-road vehicle impacts** in our sensitive wildlands.
- To encourage Jackson Hole's citizenry to **participate in the ongoing Bridger-Teton National Forest management plan revision process** in hopes of protecting the land's scenic, recreational and wildlife resources from energy development and other threats.
- To promote the Conservation Alliance's planned giving program to make it easier for donors to **contribute to the future of Jackson Hole** while balancing their family and estate planning needs.
- To **celebrate 30 years of partnering for a wild and beautiful valley!** Watch for our anniversary events planned for Fall 2009.
- To continue to improve our relationships with the community's stakeholders, deepen our connections with those who care for Jackson Hole, and **improve our ability to address the conservation issues that are most important to us all.**

# Battening Down the Hatches

## *Alliance tightens belt in preparation for tough economic times*

Jackson Hole typically has a vibrant, diversified and stable economy due to tourism in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, a strong construction industry and one of the wealthiest populations per capita in the United States. As such, the valley often doesn't get hit by recession as quickly, for as long, or as deeply as the rest of the nation. However, as we approach 2009, the U.S. economy has been in a slowdown for a year and has taken a turn for the worse.

Last spring, the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance budgeted conservatively for the current fiscal year (July '08 through June '09) due to the slowing of the economy and commensurate slight drop in revenues in 2007-08. At the time, forecasts were that the economy would begin recovering by early 2009. Today, it's a whole new world, with experts claiming that our nation is in its worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Jackson Hole and its nonprofits are feeling the impacts of the greater U.S. and world economy, and we must brace for a couple of rough years.

### Planning for the worst-case; working for the best-case

Due to strong board, finance committee and staff foresight throughout the Conservation Alliance's 29-year history, we have many reasons to feel confident in our ability to make it through the looming tough times. We have one of the best, most knowledgeable staffs in recent history. We have a loyal base of donors and foundations. The organization owns its building. Over the years, we gradually set aside about six months of operating reserves to fall back on if times get dire. In addition, as of Oct. 31, we had \$113,800 of untouchable principal in endowment money, \$51,000 of principal

in the Kimberly Doane Stewart Memorial Internship Endowment fund, and another \$58,000 in the building/capital fund.



So far, the Alliance is doing relatively well in its current fiscal-year revenue, considering the economy. The numbers of memberships and foundation grants remain high, but we're finding that the amounts people are able to donate are decreasing. Therefore, we've begun battening down the hatches to weather this economic storm as best we can. Given that we already froze the staff position of Outreach Director in Fall '07 in anticipation of a tough financial year, our challenge now is to hone our strategic focus, identify and prioritize key issues, and plan aggressively for the long term.

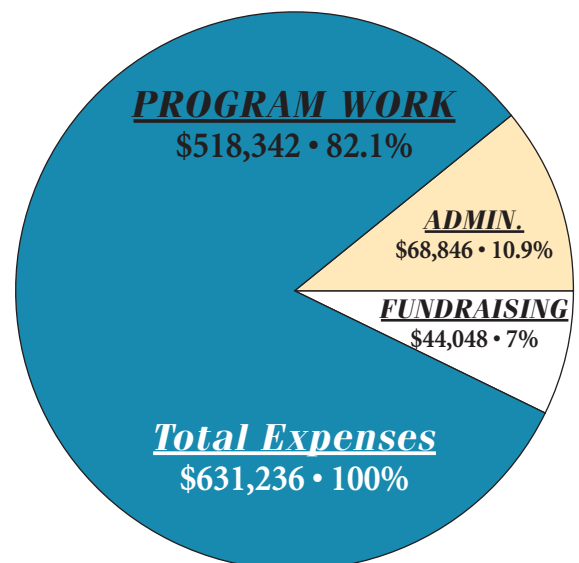
### 29 years... and counting

Money may become scarce, but the issues impacting Jackson Hole will only grow. The nature of the Conservation Alliance's work is critical, as we provide a watchful eye, analysis, and communication of conservation issues aimed at motivating members and the public to protect what we all love about the valley. Member support and donations are important – now more than ever – given the crossroads our community has reached with the Comprehensive Plan revision, encroaching wildlife diseases, and threats to public lands from energy development. Put simply, our mission remains critical. I know first-hand how dedicated our members, board and staff are, so I'm confident that we *will* come out of these economic hard times successfully, and we *will* continue to stand up for Jackson Hole's wildlife, open spaces and community character.

– Cindy Harger, *Managing Director*

## Revenues for Fiscal Year 2008 (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008) Statement of Expenses FY 2008

	Revenue	% of Total Revenue
<b>Contributions &amp; Gifts</b> ( <i>Excluding endowments</i> )	\$446,025	62%
Foundation Grants	\$90,258	12.5%
Investment Income	\$25,305	3.5%
Educational Forums, Films & Events	\$13,672	2%
Sale of Goods	\$2,144	<0.5%
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL REVENUES</b>	\$577,404	
Endowment Fund Contributions	\$128,992	18%
Kimberly Doane Stewart Memorial Internship Endowment	\$12,420	2%
<b>TOTAL OVERALL REVENUES</b>	\$718,816	100%
Operational Reserves	\$461,249	



Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance • (307) 733-9417 • [www.jhalliance.org](http://www.jhalliance.org)

*Partnering for a wild & beautiful valley since 1979*