



Dear Reader,

It's been a tumultuous year for the West: fires, floods, drought, government shutdown, oil boom, gas bust. All this and much more happened in 2013, and High Country News was there with exceptional coverage, both in our print magazine and on our increasingly active website.

The stories tackled by our editors, writers and photographers spanned a wide range of topics and geography, but several themes emerged:

Development pressure

As the country slowly began to pull out of the recession, development pressure returned to our region, not all of it in the form of urban sprawl. Contributing editor Judith Mernit Lewis took a look at the first of several utility-scale solar power plants being constructed in California's Mojave Desert. Even as it helps wean the region off coal-fired power, this massive project is already transforming one of the West's last untouched landscapes ("Sacrificial Land," April 13).

A follow-up story by Emily Green ("Mojave Squeeze," Aug. 5) tracked the steep decline of the desert tortoise, which is threatened not only by new solar power facilities, but also by military training activities, off-road vehicles and disease. Meanwhile, the federal government's current strategy of collecting and moving tortoises to new habitat ahead of the backhoes does not seem to be working.

Human activities north and south of the U.S. border are also having large impacts on wildlife and habitat. Christopher Pollon ventured to Western Canada, where several large mining projects threaten the headwaters of some of Alaska's most prolific salmon streams ("The New Wild West," Dec. 24) And Sujata Gupta introduced us to the conservationists in Mexico and the U.S. who are

trying to slow the rapid plowing up of native Chihuahuan Desert grasslands by Mennonite farmers in northern Mexico ("Of Sparrows and Sodbusters," Sept. 2).

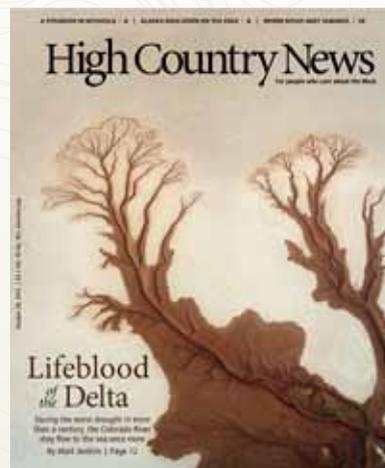
Old problems, new solutions

The year brought hopeful signs of progress on a host of long-standing Western issues, including the conservation of that most

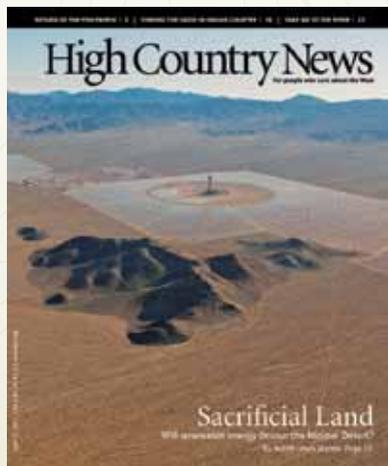
precious resource, water.

In Colorado's San Luis Valley, where potatoes and alfalfa dominate the landscape, assistant editor Cally Carswell talked with farmers, ranchers and water managers who are attempting to impose limits on their own groundwater pumping as their aquifer retreats ever deeper underground ("Farming on the Fringe," Feb. 18). And HCN's water guru, Matt Jenkins, plumbed the depths of a recent accord between Mexico and the U.S. that will provide a modest amount of water to the parched Colorado River Delta, potentially reviving its once-vibrant wetlands ("Lifeblood of the Delta," Oct. 28). The deal, ironically, was made possible by the current drought, which forced all the players on the river to come to the table.

The Northwest's forests have also reached a critical point, more than



20 years after a federal judge accepted a landmark federal plan to preserve spotted owl habitat while allowing limited logging. In western Oregon, Nathan Rice, a graduate of our intern program, discovered that owls are still declining and rural communities still



hurting. In response, the Forest Service is experimenting with a controversial new type of logging project designed to both restore owl habitat and keep timber mills running ("A New Forest Paradigm," April 29).

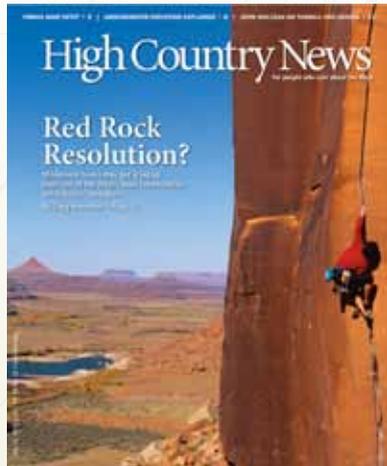
New ideas are also surprisingly alive and well in Utah, where environmentalists have long pushed uphill against the state's politics to designate new wilderness areas. Conservative Republican Rep. Rob Bishop hopes to make a legislative deal that would protect millions of acres of the state's magnificent wild lands from development while consolidating other lands for oil and gas drilling ("Red Rock Resolution?" July 22)

Our curious editors also turned their attention to the fundamental issues behind the issues. Senior editor Jonathan Thompson tackled a story about the power grid that addresses the question: Can the enormous and fragile electric grid play nice with increased solar and wind power production? His answer was yes, but only if some fundamental changes are made to the system ("Haywired," May 27). And Sierra Crane Murdoch followed her political nose to northern Idaho, where the in-migration of conservative Californians has rendered Democrats almost extinct and fomented infighting among Republicans ("Right-wing Migration," May 13).

Special Issues

The editorial team produced three special issues this year, each filled with unique Western stories, essays and profiles: "Books and Essays," our annual look at the most interesting books and authors writing about our region; "The Future: Natural Resource Education," which focused on programs that put students directly in the field; and "Travel and Tourism," which included essays from our best adventure writers, including Craig Childs, who wrote about his explorations of unheralded public lands.

The special issues not only provided our writers with new lenses through which to view the West; they also gave our advertising



partners – publishers, academic institutions and travel and tourism businesses – a great opportunity to reach a receptive audience. Ad sales for the three issues pushed our revenue to an all-time high this year – giving us money that we poured right back into journalism.

Online, On Time

In addition to producing 22 issues of the print magazine, our team also delivered a daily stream of timely news and opinion via The Goat Blog and our syndicated columns service, Writers on the Range. When a deadly fire broke out in Arizona, when floodwaters rampaged on Colorado's Front Range, when the federal government shut down, High Country News responded with thoughtful stories and commentary that put the events into a larger context.

More than 1.6 million readers visited hcn.org this year, and our Facebook site has become a place for lively discussions on a wide range of topics.



HCN's online coverage continues to attract more and more readers. More than 1.6 million readers visited hcn.org this year, and our Facebook site has become a place for lively discussions on a wide range of topics.

The Web is turning out to be a good place to find the next generation of people who care about the West – the people who will sustain High Country News in the future. We now offer free subscriptions, digital or print, to students, and more than 2,000 have taken advantage of the offer so far.

We have been sustained this year, and indeed every year throughout our 43-year-old history, by our incredibly loyal readers, who buy subscriptions, donate to the Research Fund and provide us with great story ideas and constructive dialogue on the issues of our times.

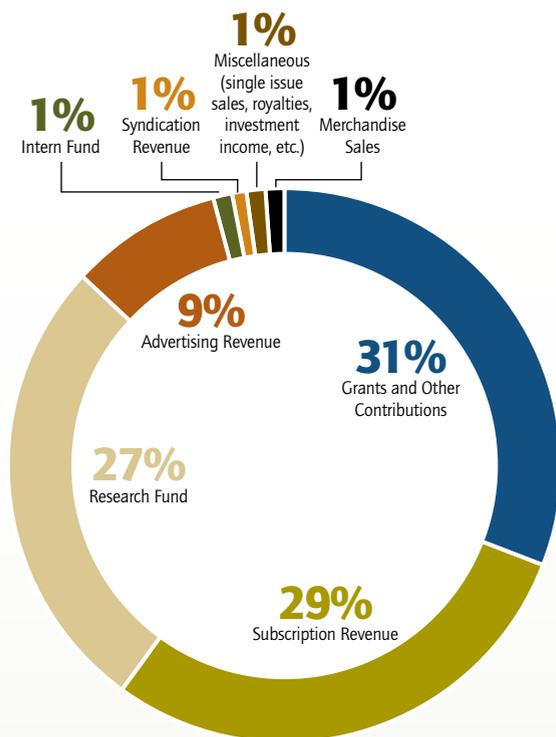
Thank you for making High Country News part of your life!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Larmer".

Paul Larmer
Executive Director

2013 Financial Statement

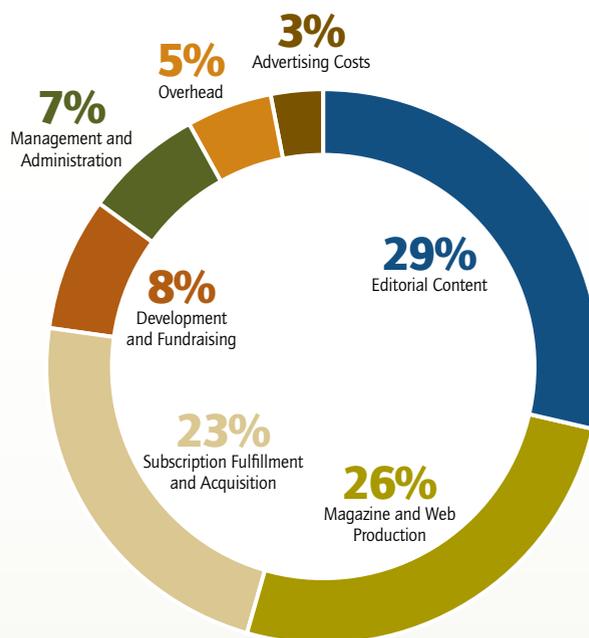
High Country News Profit and Loss October 1, 2012 - September 30, 2013



ANNUAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Grants and Other Contributions	\$ 760,073
Subscription Revenue	\$ 719,937
Research Fund	\$ 673,596
Advertising Revenue	\$ 228,376
Intern Fund	\$ 36,790
Syndication Revenue	\$ 27,783
Miscellaneous (single issue sales, royalties, investment income etc)	\$ 22,174
Merchandise Sales	\$ 12,576
TOTAL	\$ 2,481,304

High Country News' financial statements for the fiscal year of October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013 were audited by John Cutler CPA. Note that during 2012, we collected \$35,000 in grant funds that were recorded as income in prior years, per GAAP rules for nonprofit organizations.



EXPENSES

Editorial content	\$ 691,088
Magazine and Web production	\$ 609,950
Subscription fulfillment and acquisition	\$ 534,182
Development and fundraising	\$ 190,874
Management and administration	\$ 167,772
Overhead	\$ 109,534
Advertising costs	\$ 65,910
TOTAL	\$ 2,369,310
NET INCOME	\$ 111,994