

# JACKSON HOLE CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

## *Annual Report FY 2010 • Message to Our Members*



Photo by Vance Carruth

**H**appy New Year to each and every one of you! 2010 was another exceptional year for the Alliance – both in terms of achievement and our efforts to continuously improve our conservation stewardship of the valley. During these past few months, we have embarked upon an in-depth strategic planning effort – one that is gaining significant momentum.

We have been most fortunate to attract the attention of an extraordinary volunteer, Dave Muskat. Dave has spent most of his career working with industry and community leaders to think and plan more strategically. Out of all of the organizations in the valley, Dave chose the Alliance with which to share his considerable expertise. He, like the rest of us, recognizes that the Alliance is *the* conservation voice in the valley to protect the natural resources and community character that make Jackson Hole world-renowned.

Our initial efforts involved a frank assessment of the current state of our organization. Through internal working groups, we reviewed our effectiveness and efficiency in pursuing our conservation mission. While acknowledging our successes, we noted additional opportunities in our efforts on your behalf to sustain one of the world's great natural environments.

It became obvious that stewardship for Jackson Hole can be furthered by balancing our unique advocacy role with our strategic view of valley conservation. We can work constructively with our fact-based approaches to better pre-empt future conflict. We can utilize board-level focus to monitor this strategic agenda. And we can more effectively support our skilled staff as they engage a powerful partnership of members, volunteers, experts and valley conservation partners.

Next, we broadened our scope and introduced our observations to many highly-skilled, civic-motivated individuals

throughout our local community. We are so fortunate to live and work in a place with bright, qualified community leaders, and even more fortunate that many of them have joined with us in this effort. Through specific design panels, we are all generating ideas and sharing specialized knowledge and “outside the box” thinking as we review and dissect all aspects of our organization.

Our goal is to achieve ever greater impacts through conservation leadership initiatives, while raising the profile of our shared conservation “brand” in the valley. As popular and essential as our wild and beautiful valley is, we need to be more effective at garnering widespread recognition that this environment is not ours by accident. We all need to work to sustain it.

Your continued and increased support is the vote of confidence that spurs us onward in our quest to excel in our long-term efforts to steward our irreplaceable

wildlife, protect scenic vistas, shape community character and lead conservation efforts that keep our valley so special.

Without the Alliance, it just doesn't get done, and we need your help. It's been said that the Alliance goes to meetings so that you don't have to. However, we recognize that we have a very special partnership with you. The Alliance board, staff and members all work together to accomplish and share conservation success. And we all realize it is our shared community that we are safeguarding.

You are the front line in all that we do, and we thank you for your continued support.



**Pegi Sobey**, Alliance Board Chair

# Alliance Financial Picture – FY 2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010)

## Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance sustains financial health through operational efficiency, strong programming, loyal member base

Glancing at the Alliance's bottom line for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, one can hardly guess how hard the organization has worked to tighten its organizational belt and secure sufficient funding. The Alliance's fiscal year revenue topped out at a healthy-sounding \$712,500, including member donations, events, endowments and investment income. All told, the organization brought in about \$64,093 more than it spent, according to our tax-return adjusted numbers.

When subtracting "paper gains," however, the picture more accurately mirrors how the year felt for staff and board. About \$49,000 of the surplus is attributed to "investment income" from on-paper increases in the Alliance's endowment and rainy day funds, which are invested in conservative bond and index funds. Those funds thankfully began returning to their pre-economic-crash levels.

### Program work is our priority

The remaining surplus in funds can be attributed to grant money earned for specific projects with timelines that stretch into 2011. We also operated at one staff position less than usual for a majority of the year, and staff salaries and benefits were frozen beginning in 2008 to ensure that as much revenue as possible could go toward program work.

Due to the gains in investments, our reserve funds (rainy day money, operational reserves and building fund) grew to \$410,960, up from approximately \$347,000 in 2009. Our reserve funds

enable the Alliance to continually focus on its mission, even in economic downturns. Thanks to financial forethought and strong member loyalty, this cushion would allow the Alliance to operate for 8 to 10 months to permit fundraising efforts to catch up if donations lag. We also have another \$185,480 in our Endowment and Kimberly Doane Stewart Memorial Internship Program funds. Plus – again thanks to previous foresight and generous support – we have the security of owning our own office building.

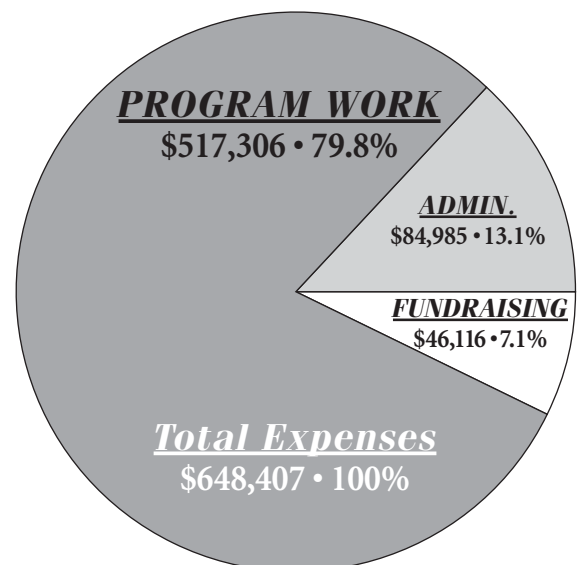
### Member contributions up from 2009

We are extremely grateful to our 2,000-some devoted members, who contributed \$576,758, an increase from 2009. We have noticed that many members are making slightly smaller donations than in pre-recession years, which reflects national trends. Also reflecting national trends for nonprofits, foundation grant funding was significantly lower than in previous years, when grants averaged 12 to 20 percent of our budget. For Fiscal Year 2010, foundation grants made up just 4.5 percent of our budget.

As the economy of Jackson Hole and the rest of the nation inches toward recovery, the Alliance's fundraising goals are clear: We intend to strengthen our relationships with current and new members, find new foundation partners, and ensure that our community understands the critical nature of the work that staff and board do on a daily basis for the benefit of our grassroots members and our environment. The health and vision of this organization remains in all of our hands. We thank you for your continued support for a wild and beautiful valley. ■

## Revenues for Fiscal Year 2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010) Statement of Expenses FY 2010

	Revenue	% of Total Revenue
<b>Contributions &amp; Gifts</b> ( <i>Excluding endowments</i> )	\$576,758	81%
<b>Foundation Grants</b>	\$31,135	4.5%
<b>Investment Income</b>	\$48,703	7%
<b>Educational Forums, Films &amp; Net Events</b>	\$43,904	6%
<b>Sale of Goods &amp; Other</b>	\$3,266	.5%
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$703,766</b>	
<b>Endowment Fund Contributions</b>	\$8,384	1%
<b>Kimberly Doane Stewart Memorial Internship Endowment</b>	\$350	0%
<b>TOTAL OVERALL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$712,500</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Operational Reserves</b>	<b>\$410,960</b>	



# 2010 Accomplishments

## Working for a wild and beautiful Jackson Hole

- The Alliance began a proactive campaign – with a growing group of individuals and organizations – to ensure that wildlife crossings are included in upcoming highway reconstruction projects in Teton County. We acquired two significant grants through 1% for the Tetons and the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole to jump-start research on the best locations and types of crossings.

- We brought together a team of community groups and individuals to facilitate an ongoing search for better options to the Forest Service's plan to move the Bridger-Teton headquarters out of Jackson and to sell public lands to fund operations. The Alliance believes it would be a huge loss to the community to no longer have the Bridger-Teton supervisor's office here, and we believe that selling public lands to fund the government's daily costs of doing business would be setting a troubling precedent.

- We provided analysis and voiced concerns on behalf of our members on a wide range of public lands issues facing the valley, including: a proposal for a full-field natural gas development in the pristine Noble Basin near Bondurant; contested oil and gas leases on the Bridger-Teton National Forest; the proposed five-lane expansion of U.S. Highway 89 south of Jackson; and efforts to pre-empt wildlife disease disasters on the National Elk Refuge.

## Ensuring responsible growth

- The Alliance's comments helped to substantially improve successive drafts of the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan, the development blueprint for how – and how much – Jackson Hole will grow in years to come. We accomplished this with the help of dedicated citizens, and through careful analysis, thoughtful proposals, and strong involvement in the public process on behalf of our members and the community.

- We repeatedly called for and finally saw passage of a moratorium on the Town of Jackson's Planned Mixed-Use Development tool. This complex tool permitted buildings to be constructed to sizes



Photo by Charlie Craighead

and scales that wouldn't have been allowed under the town's other development regulations.

- The Alliance strongly encouraged and saw creation of a joint town/county environmental commission, now called the Natural Resource Technical Advisory Board. The Alliance believes big-picture environmental review of development is as important as other review mechanisms already in existence for design codes, housing and site-specific impacts. Therefore, we will continue our work to

ensure that this board meets its potential in protecting the natural resource values Teton County residents and visitors hold dear.

- We supplied critical data – and continue to research and provide information and analyses – that government officials wouldn't otherwise have available, and that is essential for responsible decision-making.

## Keeping citizens engaged and informed

- We provided educational forums, field trips and info lunches on a wide range of environmental topics affecting Jackson Hole, including: Winter backcountry closures; efforts to protect wolverines; wildlife crossings; creating an "idle-free" community; threats from pine beetles; "The Natural World" with Tom Mangelsen; wildflower identification; the Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival; and many more.

- The Alliance partnered with other organizations on various programs such as: Nature Mapping training; Citizen Advocacy workshop; Wyoming Planning Association panels; Journeys School children's programs; and the Don't Poach the Powder campaign.

- We earned a 4-star Charity Navigator rating, which is described as: "Exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause."

- Last but not least, we very much enjoyed spending time and having good conversations with our members and the community at Party for the Pronghorn, Picnic Supper Under the Tetons, the Patron's Dinner, info lunches, forums and many other events! ■

## Some of our goals for 2011...

- To complete and implement a long-term organizational strategic planning effort, which we began in the fall of 2010.

- To revive community momentum and support for the next phase of the Jackson/Teton County comprehensive planning process. With the draft plan now in the hands of the Jackson Town Council and Teton Board of County Commissioners, this is a critical year for ensuring that the

plan upholds the community's priorities of protecting our wildlife, open spaces and community character.

- To continue our engagement in long-term public lands planning processes, such as the Bridger-Teton National Forest management plan and the Wild and Scenic Snake River Headwaters plan, to keep our forests, rivers and wildlife healthy.

- To keep advocating for sound manage-

ment of the natural and historic resources of our backyard national treasure – Grand Teton National Park.

- To grow our membership and fundraising base.

- To continue to operate in a responsible manner that ensures that the Alliance remains financially stable and able to perform its mission of partnering for a wild and beautiful valley for decades to come. ■

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## Sophie, Derek Craighead named ‘Outstanding Conservationists’

Each year since 2003, the Alliance has recognized an Outstanding Conservationist of the Year. The award honors those who have shown a lifetime of commitment to conservation, and on Dec. 2, 2010, the Alliance was pleased to grant this honor to Sophie and Derek Craighead for all of their work on behalf of the valley’s wildlife, natural resources and community.

“Sophie and Derek have long been committed to the Jackson Hole area and beyond,” said Alliance Co-Vice Chair Nancy Taylor in presenting the award at our annual meeting. “Together they are wonderful assets to the whole community and to the Alliance.”

Derek, an ecologist and the founder, president and executive director of Craighead Beringia South, has devoted many years to ground-breaking environmental research and advocacy – connecting studies and data to real-life recommendations for managing



the unparalleled wildlife of our valley.

“From his research on the Upper Snake River Basin sage grouse population to his study of the Gobi bears in Mongolia, Derek continues to use his extensive ecological knowledge and experience to improve our understanding of the world around us,” Taylor said. “The son of famed researcher John Craighead,

Derek has followed in the footsteps of his father and his uncle, Frank Craighead, as well as expanding on their legacy.”

A well-known philanthropist, Sophie supports many diverse causes – from land mine eradication in Sri Lanka, to housing homeless pets, to preserving the environment. Here in the valley, Sophie quietly and humbly supports numerous critical local and regional conservation projects, and has also served on many boards.

“Sophie brings her boundless passion for all animals to every issue that she works on, and has proven time and again to be an incredibly effective advocate,” Taylor said. “And above all, she is courageous, wise and generous in her support of many different projects. In the words of Lisa Robertson, a previous Outstanding Conservationist award recipient, ‘Thank God Sophie made the valley her home; we all win, every single year.’” ■