



*Bears Ears, Utah. Photographer Monte Wells helped run an outdoor program in this area for 17 years, 24/7. "This is the first I have ever heard of it being a sacred mountain. I was there all the time for the last three years and not once did I see any natives hanging out in the area."*

## Monumental Megabucks

*White billionaires, brown Astroturf, Green monuments. Any questions?*

*By Dave Skinner*

**B**uried in the mindless horse-race coverage of 2016's chaotic battle for the White House between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump is what President Obama is up to. Well, he's using the 105-year-old Antiquities Act to pile up national monuments as his "legacy," of course.

At summer's end, Obama added to the already massive Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (created in 2006 by President G.W. Bush) and accepted the donation of 87,000 acres of former private forest in Maine to be the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument (see East Downer sidebar). He has clocked off 26 Antiquities Act designations, with no sign he'll slow down before he leaves office. As Pomona College environmental professor Char Miller told *The Hill* reporter Timothy Cama, Obama has a "strong willingness to use [the Antiquities

Act] as long as it's on the books."

In counterpoint, Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) commented after the Maine and Hawaii designations: "No land or water is safe from President Obama's desperate legacy shopping. Congress cannot allow this abuse of the Antiquities Act to continue any longer."

Oh, really? When it comes to Congress, as all good American cowboys and cowgirls know, "money talks and BS walks." Inside the Beltway, blunt-force application of money buys churning oceans of BS in which truth often drowns without a ripple. But, just like a busted clock is correct twice a day, sometimes the churn floats nuggets of golden truth to the top to be grabbed.

Earlier this summer, the *RANGE* grapevine grabbed a nugget concerning the political cover President Obama has relied upon to keep designating national monu-

ments without Congress taking action to stop him.

Westerners have long suspected that claims of "local, grassroots support" for new national monuments are false. Only millions of dollars, anonymously and selectively spread to willing professionals, could generate such obvious and obviously expensive Astroturf. Well, now there is proof.

### Charity's Parallel Universe

For years, *RANGE* has covered the activities and murky finances of Environmentalism Inc. in the West. These groups, or their fiscal sponsors, all have "charitable" status granted by the IRS and pretend to be nonpartisan. However, all push causes, often partisan, which in turn almost always involve government participation, permission, or policy—at sum, these are political groups.

The "politicalization" of charity really began in the 1960s, when the Left (soon enough copied by the Right) pioneered the overtly political nonprofit model. Today, charitable politics has become what *Washington Examiner* reporter Susan Ferrechio beautifully describes as a "parallel universe" for political activity.

Here are a few examples. The Lois Lerner/IRS/Tea Party fiasco, which in the end was all about who gets access to the nonprofit parallel universe of power.

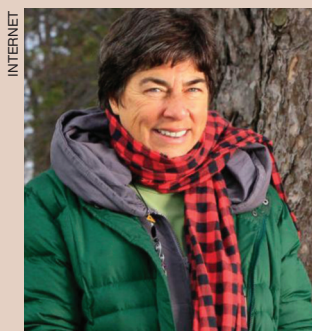
Next, the Center for American Progress, founded by out-of-power Clinton administration Chief of Staff John Podesta (brother of high-dollar lobbyist Tony). Podesta's transitions—high-level partisan operative, think-tanker, White House chief of staff and Hillary Clinton's campaign manager—show how seamless the lives of the well connected can be, spinning in and out of public service while always, always staying well paid.

Then, of course, there is the Clinton Foundation, a giant global charity that kept Bill and Hill employed and influential after they'd left the White House "dead broke." Honest!

Also important—as the Clinton Foundation controversies have shown—these charities allow foreign plutocrats and dictators deep (and expensive) access to the American

### East Downer

**O**n Aug. 23, 2016, Burt's Bees' millionairess Roxanne Quimby donated her Maine forest holdings to the National Park Service and on August 24, President Obama proclaimed a new national monument. Greens were, of course, overjoyed, but Maine's always feisty Gov. Paul LePage declared in a statement: "It's sad that rich, out-of-state liberals can team up with President Obama to force a national monument on rural Mainers who do not want it. As I've said all along, the fix is in." —DS





*Black Diamond Ranch cowboys herd cows in the shadow of the Bears Ears on their summer range in San Juan County, Utah.*

political power structure. Alongside Canadian mining baron Frank Giustra as a great supporter of the Clintons is *RANGE*'s special favorite, Swiss billionaire Hans Wyss. Like Giustra, Wyss is barred from contributing to American political candidates or parties or Political Action Committees (PACs). Also like Giustra, Wyss has given millions to the Clinton Foundation. Probably not coincidentally, Wyss also just happened to pay John Podesta \$87,000 for "consulting" two years ago. Now Podesta's name is being floated for Energy secretary in a possible "Clinton, the Sequel" presidency.

Keep in mind that none of this would work if voters could routinely learn who the players (and payers) really are.

### A Lack of Evidence

In early June, the *RANGE* grapevine radar pinged on a *Salt Lake Tribune* article by reporter Brian Maffly headlined "Monument Plan a Grassroots Movement, Supporters Say." The monument proposal is called Bears Ears, 1.9 million acres in southeastern Utah to bookend with the 1.7 million southwest Utah acres President Bill Clinton proclaimed (from the safety of Arizona's Grand Canyon) the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in 1996.

Maffly's story carried quotes from a "grassroots nonprofit," Utah Dine Bikeyah (UDB), which supports a monument. For "balance," Maffly wrote that San Juan County Commissioner Rebecca Benally (a Utah Navajo, Democrat, and monument opponent) "alleged few if any Utah Navajo endorse the monument proposal and the tribal groups pushing it are bought off by environmental groups." Maffly then declared "a lack of evidence to back this claim."

With that howler, it took *RANGE*'s legions of researchers about 10 minutes of strenuous Googling to find the evidence Mr.

Maffly couldn't. To start, UDB's website was registered in June 2011 by a Salt Lake Web designer who has also done "brand development" for Round River Conservation Studies, another organization which we will see is involved in Bears Ears "grass roots."

UDB's headquarters is in Salt Lake, not Window Rock on the Navajo reservation,

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and all three of its known paid staffers are fresh-out-of-college whites, not tribal members—one of whom came straight from Round River. Hmmm.

Who pays them? Not until 2014 did the Internal Revenue Service grant formal nonprofit status to UDB, but UDB's very first Form 990 shows total contribu-

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*San Juan County Commission Chairman Phil Lyman, like most of his constituents, opposes a designation of Bears Ears as a national monument. He has noticed that some Utah leaders haven't made their views clear: "I wish that Gov. Gary Herbert would stand up for us in rural Utah. We really need him."*

### Pen Pals

**S**an Juan County Commissioner Phil Lyman passed to *RANGE* a 2014 email from Dennis Sizemore, executive director of Round River Conservation Studies, a Salt Lake-based "environmental nonprofit," narrating events at a contentious meeting of Utah Dine Bikeyah. This private message was sent to outsiders and the county by angry UDB leader Mark Maryboy, a high-profile (and apparently sensitive) Navajo politician.

Somehow unsurprisingly, at least to loyal *RANGE* readers, the intended recipients of this email comprise a "who's who in white environmental leadership": Packard Foundation's Sam Tucker, Hewlett Foundation's Michael Scott, Pew Trusts' Mike Matz, Conservation Lands Foundation's Brian O'Donnell, plus three other co-workers, all familiar names.

Sizemore's email is clearly intended as internal damage control and paycheck protection, a communication among friends where everyone is on a first-name basis needing no further clarification: "[Mark Maryboy] called me a racist and I pointed out that his head has been up a white man's ass his whole career. It was downhill from there." Well, that explains the leak.

But the leak also explains who really supports a Bears Ears' monument: "Scott [Groene, executive director of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance] made a good case, as lawyers can do, for joining up. He argued that CLF, PEW, Packard and Hewlett would settle for a very small NCA or monument and that the Navajo needed SUWA and their supporters to prevent this.

"Letters to [UDB board members] from you [foundation staffer recipients] all explaining your positions would be helpful. CLF's letter was helpful during the meeting. However, Mark [Maryboy] countered that he has been assured by everyone that money will flow to UDB no matter what they do."

Maryboy's counter was probably correct, as CLF's formerly secret October 2014 board meeting minutes explain: "Without the support of the Navajo Nation, the White House probably would not act; currently we are relying on the success of our Navajo partners." Oddly enough, while reliant on Navajo partners for street cred, the local campaign agreed to "move away from a Navajo name" and settled on Bears Ears.

In two long years, no media outlet, not even the *Deseret News*, ever mentioned this email. Stop the presses!—DS



tions of \$72,508 and claims 100 percent “public support.”

Other IRS records (retrieved elsewhere from the *RANGE* grapevine) show that isn’t true. Of all UDB’s 2014 income, \$55,000, or over 72 percent, came in just one check from one organization, the Conservation Lands Foundation. Second, at the time of Maffly’s June story, San Juan County commissioners already had evidence in their public records of UDB’s function as a “brown” Astroturf front for the usual handful of major, multi-billion-dollar Green foundations (see Pen Pals sidebar on previous page).

### New Knowledge

There’s more, lots more, but let’s focus on UDB’s primary 2014 funder, the Conservation Lands Foundation. CLF was co-found-

ed by former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt with the mission of promoting and growing the National Landscape Conservation System, made up mostly of President Bill Clinton’s national monument legacy created from 1996 to 2001, with help from, you guessed it, Bruce Babbitt.

CLF has a staff-heavy headquarters in Durango, Colo., that hogs most of its income while making token grants to members of its “Friends Grassroots Network,” tiny groups kept on a short funding leash, such as Friends of Cedar Mesa. Not surprisingly, FCM’s primary public face is Joshua Ewing, once a big-ticket Salt Lake government-affairs lobbyist who simplified his life by moving to tiny Bluff, Utah, in 2012, and hung his shingle as a “freelance communications consultant.”

Same old tricks, different group, but a truth nugget surfaced with the FCM search results: Private October 2014 meeting minutes for CLF’s board of directors (part of which *RANGE* presented last issue), revealing that CLF pretty much set the monument shots for a cooperative White House.

That nugget shifted focus to CLF and led to another nugget, a new, alternate version of CLF’s publicly available 2013 Form 990 report. This second version includes a terrible, terrible mistake or pure gold, depending on your perspective: CLF’s Schedule B.

Political charity has become popular with the wealthy not only because of the dollar-stretching tax breaks available (35 percent), but also because IRS rules give donors almost-total anonymity. Under normal circumstances, only IRS inspectors can access donor information that is otherwise “not open to public inspection” by journalists, and certainly not by ordinary peasants.

But the state of California, darn it, has imposed regulations that require Schedule B—the donor lists, kids—be submitted to the California secretary of State and made public. Oh, no!

Shamefully, and for darn good reason, lawyers from political charities on both Left and Right are now suing California to again shroud those donor lists in secrecy.

So, our purloined, ill-gotten Schedule B shows in 2013 that CLF took in \$4.6 million in contributions and proudly informed the IRS it enjoyed precisely 99.71 percent public support. But the actual donor pages tell a truth that everyone has always suspected but could never, until now, confirm. The billionaires are calling the shots: \$4.046 million, or 88 percent, of CLF’s total income came from only eight checks (yep, see “Who Flushed This?” sidebar).

So now you understand how white billionaires hire brown Astroturf to promote Green monuments. Any questions?

### Long Odds

*RANGE* asked Phil Lyman, San Juan County commission chairman, his thoughts about being flooded with a monumental tide of Astroturf, a tide news media insist (with few exceptions) is “grass roots.”

“Frustrated,” he responded. “I’d say 98 percent of the county opposes the monument. Even the Navajos mostly oppose it.” Lyman explained that tribe chapters are “rarely unified on anything, an example being Navajo oil. Almost all is produced

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*Although you probably have never heard, seen or read of him, this man, Swiss billionaire Hansjorg Wyss, has done more to encourage the creation of new national monuments than any person on Earth. How? He opened his wallet, giving untold and mostly unknown millions to environmental groups for a spin campaign in support of President Obama’s use of the Antiquities Act.*

### Who Flushed This?

**T**he “not open to public inspection” list of large contributors of over \$100,000 to the Conservation Lands Foundation in 2013 in itself shows why keeping such information secret from the public is wrong, even immoral:

■ **Wyss Foundation, \$1.510 million:** Of course the Wyss Foundation should fund this. After all, Hansie seems to fund everything else.

■ **Patagonia, \$100,000:** This firm, which clothes its eco-correct customers in shredded pop bottles, obviously hopes to expand the places set aside for its loyal customers.

■ **Hewlett Foundation, \$250,000:** The only surprise here is the small size of the grant.

■ **Tiffany & Company Foundation, \$500,000:** Yes, this is the company that has facilitated the gouging of huge holes in the Earth so wealthy women can waste their husbands’ money building up their divorce-contingency stashes.

■ **S.D. Bechtel Foundation, \$250,000:** Um, it built Hoover Dam. This does not compute. Must study more.

■ **LOR Foundation, \$382,208:** Again, no surprise here, as it came into being when Hans Wyss gifted his daughter Amy nearly a billion dollars. It now has \$360 million, most of it in cash instruments.

■ **Michael Kowalski, \$1 million:** Why would a resident of Kinnelon, N.J., be so devoted to national monuments? Oh, that’s right, he just retired as CEO of Tiffany & Company. He and his wife are six-figure Democratic loyalists, as well.

Last but certainly not least is a “noncash, in-kind” contribution claimed to be worth \$108,157 for a 2.4 percent stake in Cataract Natural Reserve Land LLC (CNR). Among the principals of this corporation is Susan Babbitt, and yep, Cataract Ranch is one of the Babbitt Ranches.

By law, you’re not supposed to know this. But aren’t you glad you do?—DS

from the Utah part of the reservation straddling the Four Corners, but most of the funding goes to Window Rock [headquarters] and is spent elsewhere, leaving Utah Navajo members feeling left out."

Lyman had other news for *RANGE*: "I read that Conservation Lands Foundation is willing to commit up to \$20 million into getting the monument." Amazingly, that came from "big money, environmentalists and the Bears Ears story," a fine August 2016 *Deseret News* article by Amy Joi O'Donoghue. Even better, the core of O'Donoghue's honest report was CLF's 2014 board minutes—meaning CLF's secret has leaked out into the wider world. O'Donoghue also made the unsurprising revelation that the millions will come "from two key philanthropic foundations headquartered in California—the Hewlett and Packard foundations."

While Lyman was happy to finally read news coverage of the big money, he remains pensively realistic about the end result. In comparison to CLF's millions, Lyman explained: "We're organizing a fund-raiser that we hope will clear seven or eight thousand dollars after expenses. We're excited about it. We'll have fun [and] do what we can to get the truth out about this monument." But Lyman and his neighbors fully expect Obama's monument designation sometime in November, "after the election, of course."

Does Lyman wish things were different? "I wish Congress would do something about it. Congress put that Antiquities Act power in the hands of the president, and what he does is way above my pay grade. But Congress has to recognize the impacts on local people and communities and act."

Will Congress act? Well, the nonpartisan, nonprofit, nonpolitical sector will be ready, or at least the Conservation Lands Foundation will be. Its minutes read, in case of "attacks on the Antiquities Act, CLF is leading a broad coalition of national organizations that are increasingly focused on defense. The Wyss Foundation and other funders have set aside some funding resources specifically for this purpose."

Nothing political to see here, kids. Move along now. ■

*Dave Skinner is tired of hiding in his north-west Montana bunker. Depending on how the 2016 election goes, perhaps being secretary of Interior would be a nice change of scenery? Or how about running IRS's nonprofit division?*

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**ENTRY FEE:** \$5 per image.

**CONTENT:** All photos must be of the people, places and critters of America's rangelands. Color or black & white. Amateur or professional. Entries must be submitted digitally either on CD/DVD disc or USB thumb drive. Media will NOT be returned but will be secured at *RANGE* offices or destroyed.

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