

A photograph of a lynx standing in a forest. The lynx has thick, brown and grey fur, large yellow eyes, and prominent black-tipped ears. It is looking directly at the camera. In the foreground, there are purple flowers. The background is a dense forest with green foliage. A dark green rectangular overlay covers the left side of the image, containing text and a logo.

Welcome  
to the  
next era of  
conservation







Because  
incentives  
matter for  
conservation



# Yesterday's conservation tools...



72M

Acres destroyed by megafires in the last 10 years



\$22B

Maintenance backlog at our national parks



30%

Decline in North American bird population since 1970



3%

Species recovered from the Endangered Species List

...are incapable of solving today's challenges

## How we approach conservation has changed over time

In the early 1900s, President Theodore Roosevelt inspired our nation's first conservation movement. It focused on preserving what we were destroying by setting lands and wildlife aside. He protected 230 million acres by establishing the U.S. Forest Service and created our first national wildlife refuges.

In the 1970s, a new movement formed to fight pollution. President Richard Nixon

implemented far-reaching environmental laws such as the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act.

These historic actions were meaningful, but today this regulatory approach often inhibits our ability to protect our nation's land, water, and wildlife. It's time for new tools and a new way forward.



# Conservation from the bottom up

The time is right to inspire the next great conservation movement in America.

If previous conservation movements were about preservation and regulation, the next era needs to be about incentives and innovation.

At the Property and Environment Research Center (PERC), we believe incentives matter for conservation. Over the past four decades, we have harnessed them to restore ocean fisheries, improve public land management, enhance rivers and stream flows, and recover endangered species. By continuing to expand the conservation toolbox through markets, incentives, and voluntary solutions, we’re achieving lasting wins for people and nature.

Our work has transformed policy discussions and translated ideas into successes on the ground. We partner with ranchers and national park superintendents, ecologists and economists, sportsmen and senators, academics and advocates—people who love nature, and who understand effective conservation is done *with* people, not *to* them.

Today this approach is needed more than ever. As Americans, it’s our turn to carry our national conservation legacy forward to create the future we want for land, water, and wildlife. I hope you will join us.



*Brian*

Brian Yablonski,  
Chief Executive Officer, PERC

## DEFAULT APPROACH

- ✗ **Top** Down
- ✗ **Slow** and **Rigid**
- ✗ **Regulatory**-Based
- ✗ **Divisive** and **Punitive**
- ✗ **Rigid** Rules and Lawsuits
- ✗ **Politically** Oriented and **Fickle**
- ✗ **Expand** Public Lands
- ✗ **Restrict** Private Landowners
- ✗ **Conflict** Prevents Water Conservation
- ✗ Wildlife is a **Liability**

## **PERC** APPROACH

- ✓ **Bottom** Up
- ✓ **Fast** and **Flexible**
- ✓ **Incentive**-Based
- ✓ **Uniting** and **Empowering**
- ✓ **Flexible** and Voluntary
- ✓ **Market**-Oriented and **Sustainable**
- ✓ **Care For** Public Lands
- ✓ **Value** Private Landowners
- ✓ **Markets** Incentivize Water Conservation
- ✓ Wildlife is an **Asset**





## ABOUT PERC

# Creating innovative conservation solutions through markets and incentives



We are independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan, and proudly based in Bozeman, Montana.



Conservation is most effective and lasting when it is voluntary, cooperative, and makes economic sense—when there are incentives to make conservation an asset, not a liability.

PERC is the national leader in creating market solutions for conservation, with over 40 years of pioneering research and a network of respected scholars and practitioners. We explore how aligning incentives with environmental stewardship produces sustainable outcomes for land, water, and wildlife.

We bring an innovative and urgently needed perspective to the conservation community—seeking to unite, not divide, and replacing conflict with cooperation through the power of partnerships.

## OUR MISSION

PERC is dedicated to advancing conservation through markets, incentives, property rights, and partnerships.

## OUR VISION

A world with healthy land, water, and wildlife sustained by voluntary, cooperative conservation and incentives for environmental stewardship.

## A fully integrated think-and-do tank

Through a blend of cutting-edge research, effective law and policy outreach, and innovative field projects, today PERC is a beacon of hope. We're pioneering new solutions that address today's most pressing challenges from the wildfire crisis to disappearing wildlife migration corridors.



### RESEARCH

Exploring creative solutions to pressing challenges as a research institute with a national network of experts



### LAW & POLICY

Advancing ideas through environmental policy reforms



### INNOVATION

Developing, prototyping, and assessing groundbreaking conservation models







MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

# “Bottom Up” Conservation

## Exploring New Frontiers

By convening multidisciplinary thinkers and conducting in-depth analysis, we produce creative, thoughtful research that has been published in respected journals including *Science*, *Natural Resources Journal*, *Biological Conservation*, *Journal of Law and Economics*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and embraced by prominent conservation organizations and policy leaders.

**Americans overwhelmingly support protecting our land, water, and wildlife for future generations, yet today there are structural barriers to conservation that limit its potential.**

For the past century, conservation has been defined almost exclusively by government action. The default response to any environmental issue has been to pass new laws, ramp up federal spending, navigate political games, and endure endless litigation. Given the scope and scale of today’s challenges, conservation must become everyone’s job.

## Incentivizing private landowners

Two-thirds of endangered species depend on private land for their survival.

Given the scale and critical role of private lands, the next frontier of conservation must be private land stewardship. Private landowners can make a profoundly positive difference for wildlife, but conservation must make economic sense to the people doing the conserving.

PERC’s breakthrough partnerships with ranchers and farmers demonstrate that effective conservation is done with landowners, not to landowners. By deploying more carrots and fewer sticks, we can establish effective and lasting conservation as they see it, not as we impose it.

## Empowering superintendents at our national parks

America’s national parks face a staggering maintenance backlog due to a political budgeting process. Instead of politicizing our parks, PERC looks to make them less vulnerable to Washington’s budget fights and stronger for conservation and recreation.

The answers are found at the parks themselves. Park superintendents have the local expertise critical for implementing creative fixes to address growing maintenance needs and crowd levels, yet they’re mired in bureaucracy. We need to empower more superintendents to be responsive and adaptable the way a business owner would.

For example, PERC was instrumental in the passage of federal legislation that enabled superintendents to keep more entry fee revenue at the park level rather than sending it off to Washington. Local flexibility and creative funding solutions are addressing park maintenance needs, crowding, and the overall visitor experience.



# 1.5B

Acres of privately  
owned land in America

**80%** of America’s grassland

**75%** of America’s wetlands



PERC partners with Yellowstone National Park to help Superintendent Cam Sholly address critical management and conservation challenges.





CONSERVATION LAW AND POLICY CENTER

# Conservation used to be about slowing down.

Now it's about speeding up.

## We don't impose conservation, we empower it.

Conservation should unite, not divide. Yet too often environmental policies encourage endless litigation and regulatory conflict by making nature a liability for the people who steward it.

PERC's Conservation Law and Policy Center brings a refreshing new perspective to environmental policy reform based on our research. As a result, PERC is a respected policy leader—providing testimony at 25 federal congressional hearings since 2018 alone.

**Addressing today's challenges is a race against time.** Yet complexity, litigation, and paralysis all stand in the way. We're slashing the red tape that too often serves as a barrier to effective conservation.

**1 in 5**

giant sequoias  
has been killed by  
wildfire since 2020

**80M**

acres of national  
forests in need  
of restoration

## Eliminating roadblocks to forest restoration

Our forests are choking to death. After a century of misguided policy that sought to suppress all wildfires, U.S. forests have been transformed into tinderboxes more vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire. Outdated environmental laws result in red tape, litigation, and bureaucracy that makes it impossible to restore forests faster than wildfires destroy them. With 80 million acres in need of restoration, federally managed forests are in an unnatural and unhealthy state.

PERC is leading the charge to increase the pace and scale of active forest management. Ideas that had their genesis at PERC—fast-tracking forest restoration permitting, expediting environmental reviews, and making it easier for local partners to support federal efforts—are now playing a role nationwide, resulting in bipartisan agreement that recognizes the urgency this crisis requires. Thanks to our ongoing efforts, we're setting a path to fix America's forests with better and faster forest management.

## Accelerating wildlife recovery

Fifty years after its passage, the Endangered Species Act has successfully prevented extinction for 99 percent of all listed species. Yet, tragically, just 3 percent of domestic species on the list have ever recovered, falling well short of the government's own goals.

PERC's original research and specific policy reforms to accelerate species recovery have the attention of policymakers and conservationists looking to improve the act's effectiveness by better incentivizing states and landowners. By basing species recovery on the science and species-specific policies rather than a clunky "one size fits all" approach, we're helping eliminate delays that discourage wildlife conservation and putting vulnerable species back on the road to recovery.

"Bureaucracy is slow. Wildfire is fast. And bureaucracy needs to get a hell of a lot faster if we want to persist and not lose everything we've got left."

*Christy Brigham*

Chief of Resources Management and  
Science Sequoia & Kings Canyon  
National Parks





CONSERVATION INNOVATION LAB

# Innovation in Action

## Field testing the future of conservation

PERC's Conservation Innovation Lab applies our research to the real world through cutting-edge field projects that advance conservation while bridging divides. We work directly with ranchers and landowners to understand their challenges and create flexible solutions to make conservation work for them.

PERC's field projects are pioneering a transformative approach to conservation that harness markets, incentives, and voluntary initiatives. By prototyping groundbreaking new tools, cutting-edge technology, and collaborative partnerships, we're creating a new playbook for conservation in America.

## Flexible tools that “pay rent” for migrating wildlife

**Elk occupancy agreements** are voluntary, short-term habitat leases that improve elk tolerance while conserving habitat on private land. Ranchers get income from the private sector to offset the costs of elk, and conservationists get to protect key wildlife migration corridors. By addressing the costs associated with providing elk habitat, PERC is helping keep large private landscapes intact and providing valuable winter range for elk herds.

## Harnessing technology to revolutionize open landscapes

Barbed wire fencing is a key barrier to wildlife migration. **Virtual fence networks** allow ranchers to remotely map and manage livestock with GPS collars through a series of signal towers. PERC is on the forefront of this new development, supporting one of the largest projects of its kind in America in partnership with leading biologists and tech firms. With hundreds of thousands of miles of barbed wire fragmenting landscapes across the United States, the project could be transformative for open landscapes and wildlife migration.

## Livestock grazing with grizzly bears

Rebounding grizzly populations can lead to conflict that pits bears and environmentalists against cattle and ranchers. PERC is partnering with a ranching family to manage cattle like an elk herd. The cattle are clustered together in large numbers and kept on the move to ward off predators. If successful, this rancher-inspired private, market-based approach could lead the way for more creative grazing practices across the West.

“PERC and their network of dedicated conservationists are assisting with the difficult issues, participating in the hard conversations, and creating partnerships that will help sustain working lands to benefit cattle and wildlife.”

*Druska Kinke*

*Third generation Montana cattle rancher and Paradise Valley Working Lands Group Leader*

*Paradise Valley, Montana*







CASE STUDY

# Reining in the wild horse crisis

Saving horses, protecting ecosystems, reducing taxpayer spending

Wild horses and burros are at the center of an overpopulation crisis on our public rangelands resulting in heartbreaking overgrazing and starvation, as well as the decline of native species including sage grouse and pronghorn. Today, wild horse herd levels are more than 300 percent higher than what native ecosystems can support. On top of this, the federal government is housing an additional 50,000 surplus wild horses in long-term holding facilities with lifetime costs totaling \$1 billion.

To humanely address the crisis, PERC research helped inspire an adoption incentive program that encourages private individuals to adopt and care for wild horses. Directly based on this research, today the Bureau of

Land Management offers financial incentives to adopters, mitigating the economic burden associated with adopting and caring for these animals.

PERC’s practical solution alleviates the pressure on public lands, offering a caring and cost-effective alternative to traditional government-led management approaches. Through private care, adopters become stewards of the wild horses, ensuring their well-being while contributing to long-term ecosystem health. Since its implementation, wild horse and burro adoptions have more than doubled, saving taxpayers \$400 million over the lifetime of the animals.

SINCE IMPLEMENTATION:



↑ 2X+

Increase in horse adoptions



↑ \$400M

Lifetime taxpayer savings, and growing.



# United for Conservation

PERC convenes leading researchers, scientists, policymakers, conservation organizations, and passionate individuals to join together in support of land, water, and wildlife.



“PERC is an important and necessary voice in the conservation community. They understand the importance of partnerships and creative solutions that work for everyone.”

*Adam Putnam*  
CEO, Ducks Unlimited  
PERC Board Member

## Select Partners



# Invest in Conservation’s Next Frontier



## Lone Mountain Society Giving Levels

\$1,000 – \$4,999	TRAILHEAD
\$5,000 – \$9,999	EXPLORER
\$10,000 – \$24,999	ALPINE
\$25,000 - \$99,999	GRANITE PEAK
\$100,000+	SUMMIT CIRCLE

The Lone Mountain Society is a group of like-minded conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts across the country who are dedicated to developing practical solutions to conservation challenges. Your investment strengthens PERC as we continue expanding our efforts and turning innovative ideas into conservation success.

To learn more, please visit [PERC.ORG/LMS](https://perc.org/lms)



# Contact us

Appreciation for the natural world is deeply ingrained in the American spirit, along with a responsibility to protect it for future generations.

It's a proud legacy that established the world's first national park and helped further distinguish our values and ideals from every other nation on earth. It's time to renew this commitment and carry on this legacy with new tools for the future. Following in the footsteps of past conservation pioneers, PERC is leading America into the next era of conservation.

**We would love to discuss our innovative approach with you further.  
Please contact us to learn more.**



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