



epic

2020-2021 Annual Report  
Environmental Protection Information Center



# *We Speak for the Forests!*

## *EPIC Staff*

Executive Director:

Thomas Wheeler

Public Land Advocate:

Kimberly Baker

Communications & Development Director:

Amber Jamieson

Outreach and Event Coordinator:

Rhiannon Lewis-Stephenson

Legal Fellow:

Matt Simmons

Bookkeeper:

Brenda Pease



## *2020 EPIC Board of Directors*

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President

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Ava Biscoe

Secretary

Nate Madsen

Noah Levy

Judith Mayer

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## *Contact Us*

145 G Street, Suite A

Arcata, CA 95521

Phone 707.822.7711

Fax 707.822.7712

wildcalifornia.org

Annual Report Design and Layout by Amber Jamieson. Cover photo by Clary Greacen de la Montagne.

*Our mission is to advocate for science-based protection and restoration of Northwest California's forests.*



# From the Executive Director

Dear friends,

I have the unenviable job of writing about the past year. It was a year where human contact was both an existential threat and something sweet that is missed. EPIC's year was barely off the ground—Amber had just returned to the office from maternity leave after the arrival of the newest member of the EPIC family, Cora—when we began our shelter in place. At the start, we thought this was a temporary affair. We had even kept planning for a dance party fundraiser for early May when we started to work from home. But a year later, we are still working from home. I couldn't be more proud of my staff for how they adapted, thrived and had big accomplishments, despite juggling childcare, COVID scares, and innumerable Zoom calls.

EPIC protected areas dear to us (and our non-human friends). EPIC forced the Klamath National Forest to abandon the Crawford Project, saving hundreds of acres of old-growth forest, and protecting at least two owl activity centers. We beat back an illegal timber sale on the Mendocino National Forest where commercial logging was approved under the guise of "roadside maintenance," setting important legal precedent. We also produced better protections for wildlife by listing the Humboldt marten under the federal Endangered Species Act, capping off 10 years of work. EPIC negotiated reforms to Humboldt County's contract with Wildlife Services, a branch of the Department of Agriculture, to require that non-lethal methods be attempted to deal with "problem" wildlife, resulting in a 700% decrease in wildlife killing (thus far) by the agency.

These are the results of a great team of professionals like Matt Simmons. In October, Matt—a new attorney, fresh from UCLA Law—joined EPIC. Matt has been a delight to work with and a pain for the timber industry. With his big brain, EPIC has expanded our capacity and we look to tackle bigger, bolder challenges in the next year.

I am loath to not mention my other wonderful colleagues. Kimberly Baker continues to bird dog the Forest Service, where her attention to detail and on-the-ground knowledge makes her an intimidating force. Amber Jamieson is our human swiss army knife, doing anything that is needed at EPIC, including both creating this annual report and groundtruthing timber sales. Rhiannon Lewis-Stephenson is our communications ace and a seasoned activist, growing up in the forest defense movement. I can't wait until we are back in the office together to conspire. Look out, world!

One of the hardest things about the past year was our inability to spend time with you, our members. This work is emotionally draining and our job is often documenting destruction and degradation. In any other year, we could expect a good hit of serotonin from meeting and hearing from you, whether tabling at Benbow Summer Arts or the North Country Fair, or partying with you at the annual Fall Celebration. Until that time, be well and keep in touch. If you ever have any questions about our work, please do not hesitate to write to me at [tom@wildcalifornia.org](mailto:tom@wildcalifornia.org).

For the Wild,

*Thomas Wheeler*  
Thomas Wheeler



## 2020 EPIC By the Numbers

 Challenged 3 Timber Sales in Court	Participated in 9 Ongoing Lawsuits 	 Wrote 87 Articles to Update Our Members	Commented on 20 Projects 	 Signed on to over 80 Letters from Sister Organizations	Recorded 64 Live Radio Shows 	 Participated in 10 Coalitions and Collaboratives
 Sent 48 Wildcalifornia Newsletters	Generated Comments from 4,644 Online Activists 	 Sent 8 Action Alerts	Mentioned in the News 46 times 	 Filed 1 Petition for Administrative Rulemaking	Hosted 2 THP Workshops 	 Hosted 7 Webinars



# Celebrating 44 Years of Forest Protection!



*2020 was a strange, but productive year!* We are excited to share our projects and accomplishments with you.

**Wildlife Services:** In May, EPIC and a coalition of environmental and animal rights groups scored a big win for Humboldt County wildlife. Humboldt County has amended its contract with Wildlife Services, a federal agency contracted by the County to kill problem wildlife. EPIC approached the Agricultural Commissioner with a proposal that involved dropping a legal challenge in exchange for changes to the policy. Now if there is a problem animal—a raccoon eating chickens or a bear eating garbage—Wildlife Services has to attempt non-lethal solutions first and these have to fail before wildlife can be taken in Humboldt County.



**Green Flat Timber Sale:** In March, the Mendocino National Forest drastically reduced proposed logging in the Green Flat project by 84 percent in response to public scrutiny of the project from EPIC. Originally 1,534 acres were planned for logging, but the project was scaled back to 250 acres. The agency was criticized for its apparent attempt to mischaracterize logging activities as other more benign actions, such as “reforestation”.

**Crawford Timber Sale:** In August, EPIC and allies secured a legal victory saving hundreds of acres of critical habitat for two of the last reproductive northern spotted owl pairs on the Klamath National Forest, southwest of Happy Camp. The Crawford Project planned to remove 70% of the forest canopy in this important wildlife corridor, linking the Siskiyou and Marble Mountain Wilderness areas. The project was soon cancelled after we filed litigation against the Klamath National Forest, avoiding a long legal battle and safeguarding old-growth and mature forest habitat for the near future.

**Ranch Fire Timber Sale:** In August, EPIC set a legal precedent for public lands. The Mendocino National Forest attempted to get away with lawless logging, by disguising a 5,000 acre roadside commercial timber sale as “road maintenance”, bypassing National Environmental Policy Act procedures, consideration of environmental impacts, consideration of alternatives, and public participation in the management of our public lands.





# *Together We Save Wild Places.*

EPIC wouldn't stand for this and filed litigation. We motioned for a preliminary injunction to stop the logging, which ultimately went to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. There we had a resounding victory, establishing good precedent that will hopefully deter the Forest Service again from this trickery. This is going to be massively important in upcoming years as we confront a large amount of post-fire logging on our public lands.

*Humboldt Marten:* In September, after 10 years of persistent advocacy and two lawsuits, the Humboldt marten was finally listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act. This is a huge milestone as we were fought by the timber industry and even the US Fish and Wildlife Service. For a species that was once so rare that it was thought to be extinct, this is great news!



*Three Bridges Project:* In September, in response to public pressure from EPIC, Caltrans modified its project by cutting an eight-foot shoulder down to a four-foot shoulder on the new bridge to preserve the lives of several large trees, including a six-foot-wide old-growth redwood. Before this intervention, the project titled “HUM-36 Three Bridges Project” was set out to rebuild a bridge that went over Hely Creek at Van Duzen County Park.

*Richardson Grove:* In October, EPIC's attorneys argued on behalf of the ancient redwoods in Richardson Grove to defend the federal court ruling and protection of Richardson Grove that invalidated Caltrans' Environmental Assessment, which Caltrans has overturned on appeal. At the federal level, we asked for a rehearing at the Ninth Circuit. At the state level, Caltrans has not yet completed the new public comment and review period mandated by the state court. Until they do so, the project cannot move forward.

*Northern Spotted Owl:* In December, EPIC filed a lawsuit against the US Fish and Wildlife Service for failing to “uplist” the owl to endangered status and for failing to complete a 5-year status review. In response to the lawsuit, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a finding on the northern spotted owl's listing status, spurred by a lawsuit filed by EPIC and other wildlife advocates. The finding states “reclassification of the northern spotted owl from a threatened species to an endangered species is warranted but precluded by higher priority actions to amend the Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants.



Photo by Scott Carpenter



# Looking Ahead

*A*s we embark on a new year under a new administration, we will continue to stand up and speak out on behalf of wild places and the creatures that call them home. In 2021, we plan to secure more protections for wildlife and challenge harmful projects to ensure that environmental laws are followed.

We will continue advocating for more protections for listed species before the California Fish and Game Commission and submitting new listing petitions. EPIC is hard at work on a listing petition for hoary bats and continues to push forward on our existing petitions for Siskiyou salamanders and to increase protections for the northern spotted owl.

This year's unprecedented fire season is bringing us a tsunami of post-fire logging, both on public and private land. Post-fire logging is environmentally harmful, stacking one disturbance on top of another. It removes the last remaining forest structure, which is heavily utilized by wildlife, compacts the soil and harms natural regeneration. Most often, logged areas are replanted with densely packed tree plantations and we are left with artificial forests that are unable to support a diversity of wildlife or withstand high-intensity fire events. Inevitably, these projects create a landscape that makes our wildlands less resilient and puts taxpayers on the hook for the costs of cleaning up.



## **GIVE DOUBLE: Become a Matching Donor**

When you choose to give a donation, check with your employer to see if they have a corporate matching gift program. Many large companies will match your donations, making an easy way to double your impact.



## **GIVE WILDLY: Enroll in Automatic Giving**

Help EPIC mount our fiercest defense by signing up to automatically renew your membership with annual, quarterly, or monthly automatic giving options. It's secure, easy and helps your gift go straight to protecting the wildlife and wild places that need us. To renew or enroll in automatic giving, please go to [wildcalifornia.org](http://wildcalifornia.org).



## **GIVE EVERLASTING: Add EPIC to Your Will**

Consider a gift in your will or living trust to EPIC. If you currently have a will, you can easily add a codicil (an amendment) to include a gift to EPIC. An example of appropriate language for inclusion in your will or living trust is:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the Environmental Protection Information Center, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation with the Federal Tax ID # 94-2798433 and the mailing address of 145 G Street, Suite A, Arcata, California 95521, the sum of \_\_\_\_\_dollars [or otherwise describe the asset] for its general purposes and use at the discretion of the Environmental Protection Information Center's Board of Directors."



## **GIVE STOCKS: Donate Your Stocks to EPIC**

You can write off the gift and reap substantial tax savings! It's easy to transfer stocks and bonds. EPIC's investment account is with Edward Jones. Registration Title is: EPIC Inc. Account Number: 203-09101-1-7 DTC#0057

# Annual Report

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INFORMATION CENTER

Fiscal Year January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

#### REVENUE & SUPPORT

Membership & Donations	\$ 256,386
Foundation Grants	\$ 110,675
Fundraising Events	\$ 8,519
Interest Income	\$ 2,609
Legal Fees & Awards	\$ 115
Unrealized Capital Gains	\$ 7,046

TOTAL SUPPORT \$ 385,351

#### EXPENSES

General & Admin	\$ 40,704
Fundraising	\$ 48,003
Programs	\$ 137,302
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 226,009

Increase (decrease) in Net Assets \$159,342

CHANGES IN NET ASSETS \$ 159,342

NET ASSETS @ Beginning of Year \$ 186,567

NET ASSETS @ End of Year \$ 345,909

#### ASSETS

##### CURRENT ASSETS

Checking/Savings	\$ 302,943
Other Current Assets	\$ 85,715
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$ 388,659

FIXED ASSETS \$ -

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 388,659

#### LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

##### LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$ 676
Credit Cards	\$ 1,943
Other Current Liabilities	\$ 40,131
Long-term Liabilities	\$ -
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 42,750

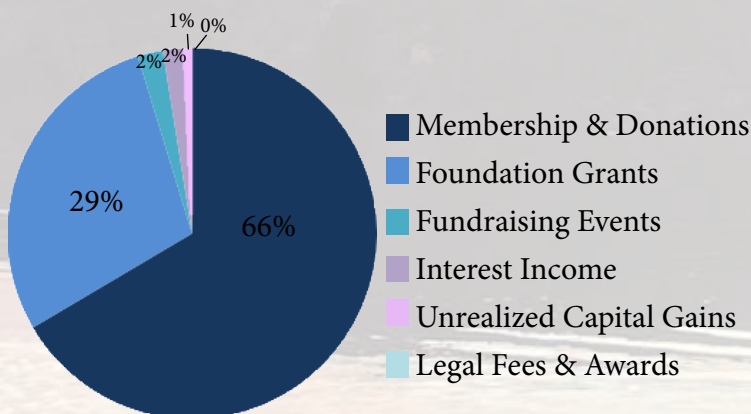
##### NET ASSETS

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 177,542
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	\$ 9,025
Net Income	\$ 159,342
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 345,909

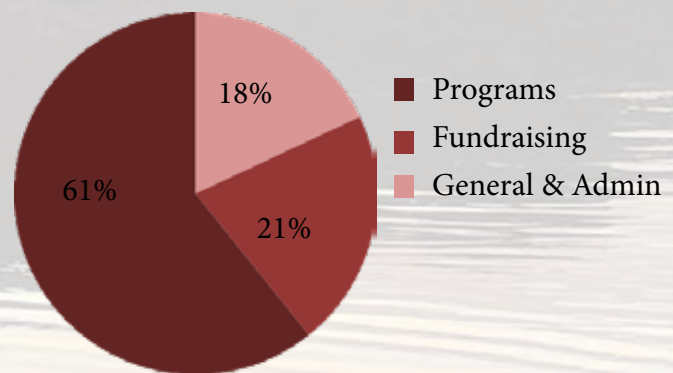
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS \$388,659

For a complete financial report visit [wildcalifornia.org](http://wildcalifornia.org)

#### 2020 INCOME



#### 2020 EXPENSES



## Contributing Foundations

Environment Now, Firedoll Foundation, Flora L. Thornton Foundation, Weeden Foundation, Wild Woods Foundation, Impact Assets, Network for Good, the Bower Foundation, Patagonia Works, Rose Foundation, The Community Foundation, Boyer Foundation, and Humboldt Area Foundation.





Environmental Protection Information Center

145 G Street, Suite A

Arcata, CA 95521

Phone: (707) 822-7711

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## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS WHO KEEP EPIC GOING!



## CELEBRATING THE HUMBOLDT MARTEN: GET NEW EPIC MERCHANDISE!

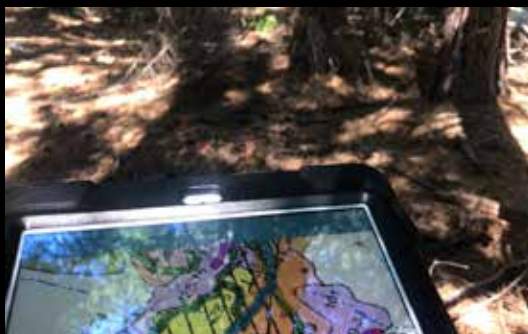


*Martes Caurina Humboldtensis*

We are excited to showcase our new merchandise that celebrates listing the Humboldt marten as threatened on the Endangered Species List with an incredible Humboldt marten woodblock design by artist Fiona Bearclaw. Humboldt martens are an elusive, cat-sized member of the weasel family. Once common in coastal forests in northern California and southern Oregon, the population was decimated by unchecked trapping and logging of its habitat. Today, fewer than 400 of these fascinating carnivores remain in four highly isolated fragments of the species' historic habitat.

Visit [wildcalifornia.org](http://wildcalifornia.org) to check out our EPIC swag! Want something shipped? Please add \$5 shipping cost per item to the "Donation" option. Local and can pick-up? Please email [rhiannon@wildcalifornia.org](mailto:rhiannon@wildcalifornia.org) to set-up a pick-up or delivery time.

## STAY TUNED FOR UPCOMING EPIC EVENTS



# Join Us!

Sign up for our newsletter at [wildcalifornia.org](http://wildcalifornia.org)

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