



Yellowstone to Uintas Connection 2019 Final Report

Agency Oversight –

Status: Y2U continues to participate in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process by submitting comments on Forest Service and BLM project scoping, Draft and Final Environmental Assessments, Environmental Impact Statements and Final Decisions as well as provide feedback on agency monitoring protocols. Y2U submitted comments on seven (7) Draft Environmental Impact Statements including the Ashley National Forest Proposal to Revise the Land Management Plan and Evaluation of Potential Wilderness Inventory Areas, the High Uintas Domestic Sheep Analysis Project, the P4 Productions, LLC (Bayer/Monsanto) Caldwell Canyon Mine, the Simplot Company's Dairy Syncline Mine, Simplot Company's East Smoky Panel Mine Project (December 26th, 2018), the John Wood Forest Management Project in 2019. Comments were submitted on two (2) Categorical Exclusions including the Burnt Beaver Restoration Project and the Ashley NF Aspen Restoration Project. Comments were submitted to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on the Idaho Steelhead Fisheries Plan. Y2U also filed an Objection on the Crow Creek Pipeline Project. The full set of comments submitted for each project as well as the Crow Creek Pipeline Objection are available for your review on our web page: yellowstoneuintas.org/issues/science.

Work Plan:

- Continue to submit comments on Environmental Assessments (EA), Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Categorical Exclusions (CE) and other stages of the land management decision-making process.
- Continue to file Objections on Final Decisions issued by these agencies when the issues identified for each proposed project are not satisfactorily addressed.
- Continue to pursue and support litigation when objection resolution is not reached for these proposed projects.
- Continue following up with agency staff as projects develop, and when possible, attend site visits where both agency staff and Y2U staff can discuss project purposes and objectives.

Expected Outcome:

Y2U has formed valuable relationships with several Forest Service and BLM staff over the last couple years, resulting in many positive outcomes including the closure of illegal roads and a reduction or elimination of trespass cattle in several closed allotments. With these positive relationships, we hope to increasingly be viewed as a resource to these agencies for data and feedback. However, Y2U will continue to be the voice for wildlife and habitat connectivity throughout the Corridor. We will continue to advocate for the use of sound science in land management decisions and when necessary, we will support litigation efforts to oppose projects that are projected to have a negative impact on wildlife and habitat.

Ashley NF Aspen Restoration Project –

Status: In October 2019, the Ashley National Forest released the Scoping Letter for the Ashley NF Aspen Restoration Project which will occur on 177,077 acres outside of designated wilderness but can also occur in Inventoried Roadless Areas. Under the Categorical Exclusion, the project is intended to move forward without any input, appeal or objection opportunities from the public, which frees the the Forest Service to cut, burn, masticate, sell, girdle, cut roots, and potentially destroy ecosystem function without any public oversight or input. In December 2019, Y2U along with Alliance for the Wild Rockies and Native Ecosystems Council, submitted comments to the Ashley National Forest regarding the Aspen Restoration Project. Following is a summary of our concerns:

1. The use of a CE and lack of programmatic or site-specific project NEPA without addressing the circumstances prevailing in this project area.
2. The lack of site-specific analysis and comparison to ecological criteria, best available science or Forest Plan intent.
3. The lack of opportunities for public input, objection and appeal.
4. There was no designation of a cumulative effects area and no analysis of cumulative effects.
5. Reliance is placed on Best Management Practices (BMPs) instead of science-based criteria under which to manage the project and overlapping uses such as livestock grazing and recreation.
6. Climate change was not addressed.
7. There was no analysis of the Regionally Significant Wildlife Corridor, ESA, special status species such as goshawk, Canada lynx or wolverine, or for that matter native plants.
8. There was no analysis of NFMA viability requirements for special status species.
9. Old growth was not addressed.
10. Aspen, livestock, active management, beetles all interactions and outcomes not addressed.
11. The costs for proposed fencing and other project elements or activities are not defined. Are contractors to be used? Will this occur in the form of timber sales?

Furthermore, we can find no information that vegetation treatments actually reduce wildfire risk and the evidence we have seen indicates they have many negative effects.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will continue to monitor the impact of this project on wildlife and habitat.
- Y2U is considering seeking legal representation to challenge the Categorical Exclusion of the NEPA process for this and several other “vegetation treatment” or “fuels treatment” projects.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

Bear River Development –

Status: Y2U continues to attend all public meetings regarding the development of the Bear River. We are resisting plans for developing dams on Bonneville cutthroat trout streams in the Bear River Range and on the Bear River itself. In the spring of 2017, PacifiCorp (the largest dam operator on the Bear River) proposed raising Cutler Dam in Cache County by 3 feet to provide more hydroelectricity generation and water storage capacity. In August of 2018 Y2U secured the funding needed for a GIS analysis on the area potentially impacted by the proposal. We have hired a leading expert in GIS Analysis and expect to have the analysis finished by the end of 2019. There are concerns that the project will inundate productive farmland and crucial wetland habitat in Cache County. Additionally, questions have arisen as to how this will accelerate the drying up of the Great Salt Lake Ecosystem and what adverse effects the project may have on Cache County road infrastructure and Logan City’s sewage treatment facility. Y2U is working with Cache County, Logan City and a local farmer group to continue monitoring this project.

Y2U also continues to monitor the activities of the newly formed Cache Water District. Y2U staff members attended the Northern Utah Water Conference in the spring of 2019. Recent announcements by the Utah Division of Water Resources calls for up to six (6) additional dams to be built on the Bear River to provide water for growth along the Wasatch Front. Two of these proposed dams are in Cache County including Temple Fork and Cub River. Y2U will oppose any new dams on the Bear River or its tributaries.

Work Plan:

- Y2U is working with Chris McGinty, a Geographic Information Science (GIS) expert at Utah State University to conduct a GIS analysis of the proposal. This analysis will be complete by the end of 2019.
- Y2U continues to monitor PacifiCorp's FERC relicensing process. We are in direct contact with PacifiCorp's Cutler Dam project lead, Eve Davies.
- Y2U will monitor the Utah Division of Water Resources in regard to building additional dams on the Bear River and its tributaries. We will advocate against any new dams.

Expected Outcome: During the FERC relicensing process, use the GIS analysis to inform and provide critical data on the project's impact to critical migratory bird habitat, local agricultural operations, and city infrastructure.

Bear River Range E. Coli Monitoring –

- Status: In 2018, Y2U monitored water quality at three locations within the Bear River Watershed. We selected these locations based on 2017 sampling results which identified three streams as areas of concern. All three of these locations have once again shown elevated E. coli levels that exceed state water quality standards for recreational contact. Y2U monitoring efforts over the past two years have demonstrated that cattle grazing on Forest Service cattle allotments are causing an exceedance of Utah and Idaho E. coli water quality standards. Each of the Utah samples were taken on a creek listed as a class 2B Contact Recreation stream in the Utah Administrative Code (Rule R317-2. Standards of Quality for Waters of the State). In accordance with this classification, the criteria were violated at both Millville Canyon and North Rich sample sites during the 2018 sample period. The Paris Canyon site is located along Paris Creek, which is designated as a Primary Contact Recreation water body. In accordance with this classification, the Idaho state water quality standards were violated at the Paris Canyon sample site during the 2018 sample period. The Utah sample sites were sampled and reported as violating state water quality standards during the summer 2017 E. coli investigation conducted by Y2U. Y2U submitted our 2018 E. Coli final report to the Forest Service. In the spring of 2019, Y2U submitted our data to the States of Utah and Idaho for listing as impaired.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will continue to promote the use of riparian exclosures and livestock exclusion to assist with the reduction of waterway contamination from livestock feces.
- Thru our media effort we will inform the public about these exceedances and urge them to contact the Forest Service and DEQ and ask these agencies to take action.

Expected Outcome: Y2U will demonstrate that cattle grazing near recreational waterways and in municipal watersheds have a negative impact on water quality and leads to exceedance of state water quality standards. Y2U will also demonstrate that the use of fencing to exclude livestock access to large portions of streambank can reduce the level of contamination from livestock feces.

Burnt Beaver Restoration Project –

Status: In March 2019, the Burnt Beaver Project was proposed by the Evanston-Mountain View Ranger District of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest to improve big game habitat, reduce conifer encroachment in aspen stands, and manage the risk of hazardous fuel accumulations on National Forest System land. The project area is located in portions of the 111,276-acre High Uintas Inventoried Road Area (IRA) and 7,997-acre Widdop Mountain IRA. The purpose of this project is to improve forest health, wildlife habitat diversity, and resilience and resistance to catastrophic wildfire at a landscape scale (70,772 acres) by reducing hazardous fuel loads and regenerating aspen in conifer-encroached stands that resulted from previous natural disturbances and insufficient past vegetation management. In April of 2019 Y2U staff met with the District Ranger to discuss our concerns which were categorically dismissed by the Forest Service with a promise of “no mechanical treatment” in the Burnt Fork drainage. In November of 2019 Y2U staff visited the Burnt Fork drainage and discovered a map of the treatment area, which included a 150-foot-wide swath of “treatment” or cutting of all trees not occurring in a 14 ft. spacing prescription 2 miles up the drainage only stopping at the Wilderness boundary. In November 2019, Y2U submitted comments regarding the Forest Service's Burnt Beaver Restoration Project. In general, we can find no information that vegetation treatments actually reduce wildfire risk and the evidence we have seen indicates they have many negative effects. We are concerned that the young aspen, which are regenerating in so many areas along this trail will be cut or burned, setting back the already occurring recruitment by a decade or more. We are opposed to any cutting or burning of aspen or removal of the downed or dead trees in these aspen stands as the project area is already good wildlife habitat. The apparent result of the treatment would be the decimation of aspen in the already healthy stands. We are concerned that the mechanical “piling” of freshly cut trees (slash) and/or deadfall will compact the soil, cause soil loss through erosion, add excessive amounts of sediment to the stream, remove critical wildlife cover and habitat, and open up the drainage for illegal ATV/OHV use. The burning and mechanical movement of downed wood will damage soils. We are unsure what means will actually be used and to what extent. The full set of comments can be found here:

<https://www.yellowstoneuintas.org/issues/science/item/128-burnt-beaver-restoration-project>

Work Plan:

- Y2U has asked for a meeting with the District Ranger to go over our concerns.
- Y2U will continue to monitor the impact of this project on wildlife and habitat.
- Y2U is considering seeking legal representation to challenge the Categorical Exclusion of the NEPA process for this and several other “vegetation treatment” or “fuels treatment” projects.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

Caldwell Canyon Mine Project –

Status: The Caldwell Canyon Mine Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released in early December 2018. This is another open pit phosphate mine on private land with BLM mineral leasing of the subsurface near Soda Springs, Idaho. This mine is proposed in an area already deemed to be a Superfund Site subject to Natural Resource Damages from past mining pollution. The proposed project will further fragment the Corridor, destroy wetlands, wildlife populations, and plant communities while polluting streams in the region with heavy metals. The mine will also cause noise and safety concerns that not only affect wildlife, but also humans. Y2U submitted comments on the DEIS on January 14th, 2019. The BLM released the Record of Decision on August 15th approving the Caldwell Canyon Mine. Upon release, Y2U concluded that the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) did not adequately analyze the potential environmental impacts of the project and address potential alternatives.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will likely file an objection/appeal to the proposed project due to inadequate analysis of potential impacts.
- Y2U is seeking legal representation to litigate violations of the intent of NEPA, NFMA/FLPMA and the CWA.

Expected Outcome: Y2U will be consulting with other environmental organizations that submitted comments on the DEIS regarding litigation options. The outcome is unknown at this time.

Crow Creek Pipeline Project –

Status: The Crow Creek Pipeline project is proposed by the Forest Service to provide natural gas to the Afton/Star Valley, Wyoming area by pipeline instead of the current use of highway transportation. Y2U's primary concern is that a large portion of the 20-mile-long pipeline route runs through Idaho Roadless Areas (IRA) and further fragments the Corridor. We are specifically concerned about the unintended road that will be created along the pipeline route and the potential for OHV/ATV use in this area. We also want the Forest Service to address concerns such as potential effects of soil disturbance, methane leaks, and the indirect and cumulative ecological impacts which must be analyzed and disclosed in the Environmental Impact Statement. These are particularly of concern where the pipeline route leaves authorized roads and trails that are already in place and enters IRAs. In February 2018 Y2U submitted scoping comments on the project. In November of 2018, Y2U and Western Watersheds Project (WWP) submitted comments on the project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was released in April of 2019 with a Finding of No Significant Impact and the Record of Decision approving the Crow Creek Pipeline was released in November 2019. Upon release, Y2U concluded that the FEIS did not adequately analyze the potential environmental impacts of the project and address potential alternatives. On June 25th, 2019, Y2U filed an Objection on the Crow Creek Pipeline Project. The full sets of comments and the Objection can be found here:

<https://www.yellowstoneuintas.org/issues/science/item/124-crow-creek-pipeline-project>

Work Plan:

- Y2U, along with Alliance for the Wild Rockies and Native Ecosystems Council have secured legal representation who is looking at pursuing litigation of the project.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

Dairy Syncline Mine –

Status: The Dairy Syncline Mine Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released in mid-December 2018. This is another open pit phosphate mine on Forest Service and BLM public land near Soda Springs, Idaho. This mine is also proposed in an area already deemed to be a Superfund Site subject to Natural Resource Damages from past mining pollution. The proposed project will further fragment the Corridor, destroy wetlands, wildlife populations, and plant communities while polluting streams in the region with heavy metals. The mine will also cause noise and safety concerns that not only affect wildlife, but also humans. Y2U and Kieshas Preserve submitted comments on the DEIS on February 21st, 2019. It is important to point out that reviewing, analyzing and commenting on these DEIS that are over 1000 pages in length takes hundreds of hours of staff time for each one. We urge you to take a look at the Dairy Syncline [comments](#) as an example of the depth of analysis. On December 8th, 2019 Yellowstone to Uintas Connection and Kieshas Preserve submitted a protest of BLM's decision to amend the Pocatello Resource Management Plan to conduct a land sale accommodating the Dairy Syncline Mine project in the Pocatello Field Office area. The BLM has proposed a direct land sale and acceptance of a donation parcel to accommodate the tailings pond which is part of the Dairy Syncline project. According to

the Draft Record of Decision (DROD), BLM has reduced the proposed land sale from 1,142.1 acres of BLM land to 500 acres and JR Simplot Co will donate a parcel containing 440 acres. In addition, to accommodate the proposed tailings pond, the Forest Service has reduced the sale of Forest Service managed land from 631.6 acres to 160 acres with a donation of 640 acres of private land by Simplot as part of the bargain. Y2U filed a protest of BLM's decision to amend the Pocatello Resource Management Plan to conduct a land sale accommodating the Dairy Syncline Mine project in the Pocatello Field Office area on December 9th, 2019. The November 9, 2019 Notice of Availability for the FEIS provided a 45-day comment period for responding to the proposed modifications to the Huckleberry Basin and Sage Creek Idaho Roadless Areas (IRA). On December 19th, 2019, Y2U submitted additional comments on this proposed modification of the Huckleberry Basin and Sage Creek IRAs.

Work Plan:

- Y2U is preparing an Objection if the DEIS and DROD which is due in January.
- Y2U, along with Alliance for the Wild Rockies and Native Ecosystems Council have secured legal representation who is looking at pursuing litigation of the project.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

Duck Creek BLM Allotment –

Status: Data collected on the BLM's Duck Creek Allotment for the past 18 years by Dr. John Carter, Y2U Staff Ecologist, has demonstrated that the BLM methods do not provide an objective and accurate depiction of rangeland health conditions or livestock forage consumption. During 2017 and 2018 Y2U attempted to address this concern by becoming involved in a cooperative effort to monitor utilization and analyze stocking rates on the Duck Creek allotment. The participants included BLM, Utah Grazing Improvement Program, Utah State University Ag Extension, Rich County Commissioners, Rich County Resource Management Group, Duck Creek permittees, Wild Utah Project, Western Watersheds Project and Y2U. Due to Y2U and the other environmental groups strong commitment to science and objective decision making, BLM and the other parties withdrew from the effort citing a "lack of trust" stemming from past litigation between the involved parties, this group has dissolved. Y2U had asked the BLM to participate in an evaluation of their monitoring methods regardless of the outcome of the collaboration. BLM has thus far declined to work with Y2U in regard to cooperative monitoring of rangeland health on the Duck Creek Allotment, refusing repeated invitations to visit our monitoring locations and see for themselves the degradation of upland and riparian areas by livestock. The BLM's Office of Scientific Integrity requested that Dr. Carter peer review their national rangeland assessment. This was done and submitted with numerous recommendations for more specificity. Dr. John Carter, our Staff Ecologist, along with Allison Jones, Jonathan Ratner, Dr. Jim Catlin submitted a research paper which was published in Rangelands Journal refuting standard BLM and livestock industry grazing practices. Dr. Carter is an expert witness in litigation initiated in January 2019 on this allotment. Since Y2U was not a party to the original case filed in 2008, he is continuing this effort in support of the Western Watersheds Project lawsuit challenging the Department of Interior appeals process.

Work Plan:

- Y2U continues to monitor utilization and forage production on the Duck Creek allotment and continues to put pressure on BLM to accurately measure utilization and use accurate data and range science to affect management decisions including stocking rates.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

East Smoky Panel Mine Project –

Status: The East Smoky Panel Mine Project at Smoky Canyon Mine Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released in late September 2018. This is another open pit phosphate mine on Forest Service managed land near Afton, Wyoming. The expansion of this mine will further fragment the Corridor, destroy wetlands, wildlife populations, and plant communities while polluting streams in the region with heavy metals. It is already listed as a Superfund site due to selenium pollution of Pole Canyon Creek which resulted from burying Pole Canyon Creek with contaminated overburden. The mine will also cause noise and safety concerns that not only affect wildlife, but also humans. Y2U and Kieshas Preserve submitted comments on the DEIS on December 26th, 2018.

Work Plan:

- Upon release, Y2U will address whether the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) adequately analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the project and addressed potential alternatives.
- Y2U will file an Objection if the FEIS does not adequately analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and potential alternatives.
- Y2U will be seeking legal representation to litigate violations of the intent of NEPA, NFMA/FLPMA and the CWA.

Expected Outcome: Y2U expects the usual Forest Service and BLM FEIS and Record of Decision that fails to address the seminal environmental issues will be produced by the agency. Y2U will be consulting with other environmental organizations that submitted comments on the DEIS regarding litigation options. The outcome is unknown at this time.

Environmental Advocacy –

Status: An important part of our work involves publicly advocating for the restoration of degraded watersheds, intact ecosystems, and wildlife habitat connectivity. We are helping empower citizens to get involved with these efforts. In 2017 we conducted our first Successful Activism Training featuring presentations from PhD Psychologist Dr. David Christian and non-profit lobbying expert Stacey Frisk. The training helped introduce forty people to methods for interacting and working with decision makers. Whether you are lobbying politicians, communicating with public lands managers, or partnering with private landowners, it is important to have the tools to foster working relationships with individuals and groups from differing backgrounds. In January of 2018, Y2U hosted the second annual Successful Activism Training at Squatters Brewery in Salt Lake City. The sold-out event was a huge success thanks to the hard work of our staff and speakers at the event. We are proud to have welcomed back Dr. David Christian who spoke for the second time with us on a communication technique known as Motivational Interviewing. We have been using this training in our work since 2016 to create working relationships with agency staff and various other stakeholders. During the 2017, 2018 and 2019 Utah State Legislative Sessions, Y2U lobbied against Bear River Development and for SB 151 which would reduce the State's property tax subsidization of water use. Utah uses more water than any other state in the nation due to the perceived low cost. Utah needs to move to a higher tier rate system that encourages conservation. In September 2019, Y2U sponsored and tabled at the Peoples Energy Summit in Salt Lake City. Also, in September of this year Y2U participated in the Patagonia Enviro Fair in Salt Lake City.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will continue to host the Successful Activism workshops.
- Dr. Carter is producing articles about the Corridor and, in particular, the phosphate mining industry for publication in national and regional media outlets. See the latest example [here](#).
- Due to the Bayer Co. recent purchase of Monsanto and our involvement in their Caldwell Canyon Mine, a German business magazine also spent a day with Dr. Carter at the mine site and Kieshas Preserve to write an article which was published in Germany.
- Y2U continues to submit Op Eds and subject material to media outlets with regard to the Yellowstone to Uintas Connection corridor. See Dr. Carters recent article about the sheep industry abandoning their Pyrenees herd dogs [here](#).

Expected Outcome: Continue our lobbying efforts, activism trainings, and awareness campaigns to raise public involvement in conservation and expand public awareness of environmental issues. Y2U will continue to archive monitoring reports, literature reviews, research papers, and presentations on our web page for other activists and conservation professionals to use:

<https://www.yellowstoneuintas.org/resources>

Environmental Education –

Status: Education is critical to the work we do. In 2018, we significantly expanded our education and outreach efforts, specifically for youth. During the summer of 2018 Y2U conducted numerous community presentations on watershed and wildlife issues around the corridor. Y2U also hosted three full day educational events for sixth and eighth grade students from rural schools in northern Utah and Southeastern Idaho at our adopted Limber Pine Trail in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. We taught these students about forest ecology and succession, watershed services, and bird and animal identification. Y2U put together an extensive field guide which was provided to each participant and encouraged the students to go home and “teach” their family what they learned at our event. Y2U will attempt to procure funding for additional youth education opportunities in 2020.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will continue to provide environmental education through public presentations.

Expected Outcome: Educate youth on basic forest ecology and watershed service as well as provide environmental education opportunities to the communities in and around the corridor.

John Wood Forest Management Project –

Status: In 2017, Y2U along with Wildlands Defense and Alliance for the Wild Rockies submitted scoping comments in response to the Forest Service's John Wood Forest Management Project in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. In January of 2018, Y2U joined the Caribou Forest Initiative (CFI) and had been working the past year and a half as part of this collaborative group that includes Idaho state Legislators, County Commissioners, local industry including sawmills, mining and grazing, local concerned citizens as well as Idaho Conservation League and Greater Yellowstone Coalition to assure that sensitive areas are avoided and that funding is generated from this timber project to accomplish benefit for fish and wildlife through habitat improvement, stream rehabilitation, and corridor protection. This collaborative group analyzed and submitted recommendations to the Forest Service regarding the John Wood Forest Management Project. Unfortunately, the comments submitted were mostly written by ICL and Y2U and none of the other members of the collaborative signed on to the group comments. Due to a lack of meaningful involvement by other members of the collaborative and pressure for Y2U to “water down” our comments on future projects, Y2U will no longer take part in the CFI. Y2U submitted additional and separate comments on the DEIS for this project on February 1st, 2019. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was released mid-summer, 2019 with a Finding of No Significant Impact. On October 2nd, 2019, Kiehsas Preserve, Alliance for Wild Rockies and Wildlands Defense submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to sue the forest service on this project in regard to Canada Lynx and Lynx linkage. On November 25th, 2019, the District Ranger in charge of the project issued an order for his staff to revisit the Biological Assessment relative to Canada Lynx and initiate informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will respond to the determination in the revised Biological Assessment within 60 days. No bids were received for the timber contract and this will be sent out for bids again in the future. Y2U did not sign on to the NOI due to our participation in the CFI during this project planning process.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will monitor the project to ensure that the agreed upon project protocol and benefit to fish and wildlife is accomplished.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

Landowner Conservation Campaign –

Status: Private land makes up a significant portion of the Corridor and represents an opportunity to establish positive working relationships with those who rely on these lands for their livelihood. In May of 2019, Y2U received the GIS analysis that was funded through a joint grant proposal with project partner Wild Utah Project. This GIS analysis completed by Wild Utah Project determined key wildlife impedance points, as well as bottlenecks, in a portion of the corridor occurring south of Caribou County in Idaho and North of Davis County in Utah stretching East to Mountain View, Wyoming. We are especially interested in how these impedances and bottlenecks overlay with private land. This will help inform our Landowner Conservation Campaign where we will help procure funding, expertise and other resources for private landowners to install wildlife friendly fencing and riparian area livestock exclosures, assist with conservation easement procurement, and push for the implementation of other regenerative ranching practices that benefit wildlife. Unfortunately, this project has not had the time allotted that is needed thus far due to the high volume of EA, EIS, and other Forest Service and BLM proposed project involvement requiring immediate attention and staff time. We will follow up with those landowners that are having a high frequency of entanglement by wildlife in their fencing and schedule on-site visits for next spring.

Work Plan:

- Y2U has finished analyzing the WUP results and will be sending out correspondence to the high priority landowners this winter regarding entanglement issues on their property.
- In 2020, Y2U will work to ground truth the GIS analysis and prioritize identified parcels.
- Y2U will begin the outreach campaign with high priority private landowners to establish relationships with potential program participants.
- Y2U will incentivize program participation by assisting landowners with writing grant proposals to procure funding for wildlife friendly fencing, riparian exclosure and technical assistance leading to an increased margin for the operation.

Expected Outcome: Provide resources and assistance for private land restoration efforts and habitat connectivity throughout the Corridor.

Limber Pine Trail –

Status: In 2016, Y2U adopted the 1.2-mile Limber Pine Trail in the Bear River Range in the Logan Ranger District of the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. This trail is a heavily visited location near Bear Lake and receives over one-hundred visits per day during the summer months. By adopting this trail, maintaining the educational signs, and visiting with hikers, Y2U engages users by creating a dialogue regarding the surrounding wildlife, watershed and human impacts. In September 2017, we received a grant from the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) to conduct three (3) youth environmental education events at the Limber Pine Trail in 2018. During the summer of 2018 Y2U hosted educational events for over 75 students from rural northern Utah and southeastern Idaho, teaching the students about forest ecology and succession, watershed services and bird and animal identification. Y2U put together an extensive guide for each participant and encouraged the students to go home and “teach” their family what they learned at the event. In 2018, Y2U hosted 3 education events for 6th and 8th grade students from rural schools in Northern Idaho and Southeastern Idaho at the Limber Pine trail. The Herald Journal featured Y2U in an article about our adoption and maintenance of the trail and youth education programs. Unfortunately, Y2U did not host any youth education events at the Limber Pine Trail in 2019 due to the high volume of EA, EIS, and other Forest Service and BLM proposed project involvement requiring immediate attention and staff time.

Work Plan:

- We will continue to raise awareness of the trail with social media and newspaper publications.
- Procure funding to host additional education events in 2020.

Expected Outcome: Continue using the trail for adult and youth environmental education opportunities.

OHV/ATV Noise and Dust Study –

Status: Prior to 2017, Y2U collected over 100 days of sound data on snowmobiles, ATVs, dirt bikes and other vehicles on access roads and dispersed campsites within the Caribou National Forest. Over two thousand records of observations were entered into the database to date. In summer of 2016, there was a large increase in traffic with sound levels recorded at over 100 dB, so we decided to delay our sound report to allow for additional data collection in 2017. During the summer of 2017, we worked with Dr. Randy Martin from Utah State University, as well as an undergraduate intern who helped us collect both air quality and vehicle number data for Paris Canyon. Y2U expects Dr. Martin's report by the end of December 2019, which was delayed in 2018 for reasons out of our control. Dr. Martin and Dr. John Carter will be working on another summer of data collection for 2020 in Paris Canyon.

Work Plan:

- Waiting for the final report from Dr. Randy Martin.
- Analyzing opportunities to expand our data collection in 2020.
- In 2020 our staff GIS analyst Denise Petersen will be generating a map of the Bear River Range portion of the Corridor to show areas impacted by sound from OHVs.
- Distributing the updated sound and air quality reports once they are complete to Forest Service staff to propose changes to their speed limits, road maintenance and law enforcement in the Caribou National Forest.
- Presenting the report to the local County Commission to propose changes to their speed limits, road maintenance and law enforcement on county access roads to the Caribou National Forest.
- Continue leasing equipment for monitoring air quality (particulates), video with stereo sound, speed radar, and sound (decibel levels).

Expected Outcome: By exposing the excessive OHV usage - including excessive speeds, dust and noise - we hope to encourage action by the Forest Service. The resulting data set from this project will help with ongoing efforts to create summer and winter travel plans for OHVs that reflect the recent increase in traffic. The project is an important element of protecting wildlife in the Corridor and providing opportunities for quiet recreation.

Paris Creek Restoration –

Status: The project goal is to restore habitat for Bonneville cutthroat trout in the 3-mile reach of Paris Creek affected by an irrigation diversion on the adjacent Caribou National Forest. Our goal is to increase stream flows in this mostly dewatered reach of Paris Creek. Dr. John Carter, Y2U staff ecologist, has been working on this project for nearly two decades, engaging the Forest Service and Idaho Fish and Game to conduct fish surveys. These were completed in 2001 and 2012, showing that Bonneville cutthroat trout are missing from the dewatered reach. The Forest Service brought equipment and expertise in 2016 to actively restore stream channels, create pools and riffles and plant willows along the streambank in the portion of Paris Creek on the Forest. Dr. Carter and the Forest Service fisheries biologist looked at the effectiveness of the restoration efforts along the portion of the creek in the Forest and reported great progress. Idaho Department of Environmental Quality surveyed fish, invertebrates and wildlife along the Kiesha's Preserve reach this summer. We are now engaged with these agencies, private landowners, irrigation district and PacifiCorp to return enough flow to sustain cutthroat trout. PacifiCorp has recently announced that they intend to decommission the power plant, thereby not needing to divert the water out of the upper stretch of Paris Creek. PacifiCorp is currently suggesting that a minimum of 16 CFS be released into the creek during the irrigation season. Ultimately, increased flow will restore the ability of Bonneville cutthroat trout to inhabit this entire 3-mile stretch of Paris Creek that is currently dewatered.

Work Plan:

- The Forest Service started implementation of the habitat reconstruction in September 2016 and it is now complete. We continue to jointly monitor project success, and there are already deep pools and riffles on the site as a result of the restoration. All willow plantings have survived. During the summer of 2020 we will continue to monitor flows and water quality in relation to Bonneville cutthroat trout habitat specifications.

- In 2018, Kiesha's Preserve asserted its water rights on Paris Creek which will remain in the stream and give us an additional wedge to force more water to remain in the creek at the diversion structure.

Expected outcome: Y2U is currently attending meetings and negotiating to have more or all of the stream returned to the upper reach of Paris Creek which occurs above the power plant and the point of diversion for the irrigation company.

Paris Hills ITAFOS (formally Agricom) –

Status: Paris Hills ITAFOS is a proposed underground phosphate mine in Bloomington Canyon near Kiesha's Preserve, the wildlife preserve that Y2U manages, and Paris, Idaho. Due to underground pumping and reinjection issues, the mine permitting process was delayed by two years. Y2U has been negotiating for off-site mitigation for this phosphate mine, submitted sage grouse monitoring and mitigation plans to the mining company as well as State and Federal Agencies, and discussed the lack of air quality monitoring with DEQ. Some of our efforts to date have resulted in an expanded groundwater monitoring program and exploration of the use of more efficient diesel trucks to limit air pollution. There was an additional delay in the permitting process due to the buyout of Agricom by ITAFOS.

Work Plan:

- Track permitting and submit comments to the involved agencies.
- Continue negotiations for off-site monitoring and mitigation and cooperate in joint monitoring of Paris Creek and Bloomington Creek flows and water quality.
- Engage with local grazing associations and encourage improved cattle management around sage grouse habitat.
- Utilize local media to educate the public and urge the County to press for full transparency on environmental issues (air, water and noise pollution) related to the mine and surrounding land.
- Request public hearing on air quality issues.

Expected Outcome: Additional concessions from the mining company and cooperation on mitigating wildlife and OHV impacts in the adjacent areas of the Bear River Range.

Pocatello Municipal Watershed –

Status: The Westside Ranger District of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest continues to permit cattle to graze and pollute watersheds and streams that comprise Pocatello's water supply. In 2012, Y2U organized an allotment tour with the Forest Service and other interested parties and livestock permittees. The Forest Service management allows continued pollution of the streams and water supply by livestock. Our report and comments were submitted on the DEIS, showing all the streams in this 43,200-acre project area were polluted by nutrients, sediment and E. coli. We have engaged Pocatello City and provided our information to them and urged them to request that the watershed be closed to grazing. Pocatello City did request that the Forest Service close the area to grazing. Currently, the Forest Service continues permitting grazing at the same level. Y2U submitted a very direct rebuttal of this decision to the Forest Service. Our work led to them closing a small portion of the watershed to grazing. Y2U opposed the Forest Service's categorical exclusion of the new decision to force Pocatello City to build and maintain fences to protect this portion of the watershed, which should be the responsibility of the livestock permittees. Pocatello is already paying the costs of treating their drinking water, their discharge water and this will only increase those taxpayer costs. The city recently passed a \$9.5 million bond issue to obtain more surface water rights in this watershed largely due to the water quality issues related to their current water supply. E. Coli data collected by Y2U indicates that this watershed needs to be closed to livestock grazing. Follow up monitoring by Idaho DEQ validated our data.

Work Plan:

- Prepare a Freedom of Information Act request for data and information from the Forest Service.
- Y2U is currently seeking legal representation to challenge the Forest Service and their continued renewal of grazing permits in this municipal watershed.

Expected Outcome: Continue placing pressure on the Forest Service to manage the allotment in a way that reflects the current impact that current grazing has on the drinking water of more than 100,000 citizens. Continue conducting water quality monitoring, submitting comments, and raising awareness through media.

Rasmussen Valley Mine –

Status: The Rasmussen Valley mine is a 440-acre open pit phosphate mine. This new mine will impact the region by destroying wetlands, wildlife populations, and plant communities as well as polluting the Blackfoot River and its tributaries with heavy metals. The mine will also cause noise and safety concerns that not only affect wildlife, but also humans. Y2U submitted comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in 2016. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) came out in September 2016. Y2U filed an Objection on March 1, 2017. Y2U was unable to find legal support for litigation efforts to stop this new mine but our comments and objection have informed the mining company and agencies about the negative impacts for the Corridor, the wildlife and the watersheds due to this type of mountaintop removal project and we continue to hammer on these issues with each new project that is proposed. Lack of legal representation is the only reason we did not litigate this project.

Work Plan:

- Monitor regional environmental impacts of the new mine and other phosphate mining activity in the region.
- Continue submitting comments and taking part in the NEPA process for mine permitting in this region and raise awareness of the impact of these mines.
- Work on additional mitigation with this and other mines in the region to offset environmental impacts.

Expected outcome: We hope to obtain additional mitigations to offset damage and pollution and to improve fish habitat, reduce grazing, and considering deer and elk migration pathways in the region.

Red Ryder Vegetation Management Project –

Status: In late 2017, Y2U and Wildlands Defense submitted comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and a proposed alternative for analysis in response to the Forest Service's plans to thin timber in the Bear River Range, both in the Logan and Ogden Ranger Districts. The timber harvest and creation of roads will increase habitat fragmentation and degradation within the Bear River Range and the regionally significant Corridor. In the spring of 2018, Y2U staff toured the project area with the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Silviculturist and several other Logan Ranger District staff members. New road construction, gravel pit, prescribed burn and timber harvest areas were inspected. Impacts from the project were discussed as well as potential mitigation of these impacts. In June of 2018, a Final Decision and Finding of No Significant Impact was issued by the Logan Ranger District. Y2U chose not to object to this decision and will monitor whether the Forest Service sticks to the agreed upon mitigation including permanent road closures of new and existing roads in the project area. Implementation of this project by the Forest Service has not occurred at this time.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will monitor the impact of the project and work with the Forest Service regarding closing new and existing roads in the project area.
- Work with the Forest Service to ensure sound science is used for thinning prescriptions and that the logging company adheres to such prescriptions.
- Ensure that vegetation management projects ensure the protection of sensitive habitat and that habitat fragmentation is considered during the planning of future forest restoration projects in the region.

Expected Outcome: Unknown at this time.

Road Closures –

Status: In October 2017, Y2U began working with the Montpelier Ranger District to close illegal OHV/ATV roads. In 2017 Y2U assisted with the permanent closure of five (5) miles of unauthorized user-created routes. In 2018, using heavy equipment donated by Kiesha's Preserve, the wildlife preserve that Y2U manages, we were able to offer the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache and Caribou-Targhee National Forests the resources and labor needed to close unauthorized user created routes according to each Forest's Travel Plans. In 2018, Y2U assisted the Forest Service in the permanent closure of over seven (7) miles of roads and fifteen (15) illegal campsites in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and one and a half (1.5) miles of roads and fifty (50) illegal campsites in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forests. In August 2018, Y2U director Jason Christensen toured the project worksites with the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache Forest Supervisor, Dave Whittekiend and Logan District Ranger Jennefer Parker and Montpelier District Ranger Mike Duncan to assess work progress and plan for future road closure work. Y2U submitted a RAC grant proposal in March 2019 to assist with funding route closures in the Caribou National Forest. The RAC proposal was not funded. Y2U had still intended to assist the Montpelier Ranger District of the Caribou National Forest with additional unauthorized user-created routes but for reasons unknown at this time, we were not asked to assist as planned during the summer of 2019. Y2U did however assist the Logan Ranger District with the closure of an additional three (3) miles of unauthorized user-created routes and the closure of multiple illegal campsites, some of which occurred within the Wilderness boundary, in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest during the summer of 2019.

Work Plan:

- Meet with Uinta-Wasatch-Cache and Caribou-Targhee National Forests over the upcoming months to discuss closing additional user-created routes and illegal campsites in 2020.

Expected Outcome: Our goal is to close an additional 10 miles of user-created routes and 50 illegal campsites in 2020.

Idaho Steelhead Fisheries Plan –

Status: In late December 2018, Y2U submitted a letter to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with regard to Idaho Fish and Game's (IDFG) Snake River Steelhead Fisheries Plan. IDFG closed the fall steelhead season on the Clearwater River and Lower Snake River drainages this past September due to poor fish returns. The economic effect on rural Idaho communities from closing this steelhead season early and potentially not opening future steelhead seasons must be considered. Downstream impacts, especially downstream federally operated dams, killing the vast number of Idaho's wild steelhead need to be analyzed. Idaho's steelhead fishing outfitters are a key component to promote education regarding the magnificence of the wild and hatchery steelhead, the elevation which they climb, the miles which they travel and the obstacles that they overcome to return to Idaho and the Snake River (SR) system. Idaho's steelhead fishing outfitters help to instill in the public a deep respect for and desire to support conservation efforts for the SR steelhead fishery. Eliminating a generation of steelhead fisherman by eliminating the opportunity to fish for the SR steelhead could have detrimental effects on future conservation efforts concerning the SR system steelhead. Idaho outfitters have taken many steps, such as, guide and client education, acquiring more fish friendly gear and through the use of landing and handling techniques that minimize harm to incidentally caught wild steelhead. While Idaho anglers targeting hatchery fish do incidentally catch wild fish and this does result in the death of approximately 3.2% of returning adult wild SR steelhead, this incidental mortality is minor in comparison to the lethality of the federally operated dams downstream. 98.6% of Idaho's SR steelhead die from causes downstream. Of the 1.6% that return to Idaho, 3.2% of these may die from incidental interactions with anglers. The harm caused by Idaho anglers does not compare to the catastrophic mortality inflicted on the fish as they migrate to and from the Pacific. Reservoirs full of warm water, travelling over and through eight (8) federally operated dams and water quality issues from Columbia River Gorge industry have far more negative effect on the SR steelhead than do Idaho anglers. In late February, the IDFG opened the 2019 spring and fall steelhead seasons.

Work Plan: We will continue to provide commentary to NOAA and IDFG with regard to how seasons, rules, and regulations impact the fishery and those who rely on it.

Expected Outcome: Continued success of the Snake River Steelhead Fishery.

Three Creeks –

Status: This 140,000-acre intensive infrastructure and grazing project by the BLM and Forest Service will further fragment wildlife habitat in the Bear River Range. We have been negotiating with BLM for four years to engage the public in an objective, science-based project. The effort has not moved the agency. We continue to work with other organizations to promote a project that sets aside streams and watersheds, important to cutthroat trout, sage grouse and pronghorn, for protection. We and our partners have collected habitat and water quality data and submitted it to the agency as well as providing detailed comments on the draft EA/EIS, which has been delayed for over a year. In August of 2018, Y2U along with Western Watersheds Project (WWP) filed an appeal to the Final Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact. We will continue to monitor riparian conditions in the Three Creeks allotment and provide feedback to the BLM based on their monitoring methods. We will also give suggestions for improved monitoring methods that more accurately reflect the true condition in over-grazed riparian areas.

Work Plan:

- Consulting with WWP on potential litigation options.

Expected Outcome: Our goal is to work with the BLM to establish better monitoring of riparian areas and sage grouse habitat within the allotment.

UDWR Helicopter Landing in Wilderness -

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources proposed to make up to sixty (60) helicopter landings in three Wasatch Mountain Wilderness areas, the Twin Peaks Wilderness, the Lone Peak Wilderness and the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness in the fall of 2017 in order to capture and collar approximately 20 Rocky Mountain goats and approximately 10 Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep for monitoring purposes. In March of 2017 Y2U, along with Western Wildlife Conservancy, Wild Utah Project, Wildlands Network, Save Our Canyons, Sierra Club, Wilderness Watch and Voices of Wildlife, submitted comments on the project to the UDWR. In January 2018, an Objection was filed on behalf of Y2U, Wilderness Watch, Western Wildlife Conservancy, Save Our Canyons, and the Sierra Club. During the summer of 2019 UDWR officially dropped the proposal!

Uintas Wilderness Cattle Monitoring –

Status: In 2013, Y2U reported to the Uinta Wasatch Cache National Forest and the Ashley National Forest that cattle were trespassing, long-term, in the Burro Peaks, Thompson Peak and West Beaver allotments, which were closed to grazing in the 2003 Forest Plan Decision. Y2U documented these trespass cattle in fall of 2015 and reported this trespass to both Forest Supervisors. Y2U has continued monitoring year after year, reporting results to the Forest Service. The Forest Service has been using deferment tactics with Y2U since we began reporting this issue in 2013 continually putting the onus on our staff to identify whose cattle the offenders belong to. During the 2018 summer monitoring of the three closed allotments, only Burro Peaks had trespass and unauthorized cattle use. Thompson Peak and West Beaver allotments remained livestock free. In the summer of 2018, Y2U placed twelve (12) game cameras throughout these allotments to capture irrefutable data; photographs that are labeled with date, time and coordinates. We have provided the Ashley and Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forests with our final report and the evidence of trespass and unauthorized use including dates, coordinates, ear tag color, brand and photos of the occurrences. During the spring of 2019, Y2U staff met with one of the permittees, the Lonetree Ranch, that run cattle in the Burnt Fork and Beaver Creek allotments that surround the closed allotments. Lonetree Ranch, with Y2Us support, was able to convince the Forest Service to try combining the Burnt Fork (West Side) and Beaver Creek allotments for three years. Grazing rotation started on one end of the allotments moving to the West throughout the season. Next year the rotation will start on the opposite end and move East.

The third year of the trial will have no grazing and rest both allotments. Y2U will monitor the impact of combining the allotments closely to ensure that the adaptive management results in a healthier forest. The most beneficial part of combining the allotments was that it allowed Lonetree Ranch to justify the cost of having a range rider on the combined allotments ensuring that the Lonetree Ranch cattle were where they were supposed to be. This summer Y2U placed eight (8) game cameras throughout the Burro Peaks allotment to capture irrefutable data; photographs that are labeled with date, time and coordinates. In large part due to having the range rider present all season, Y2U only documented two days of unauthorized use of the Burro Peaks allotment and no unauthorized use of the Thompson Peak and West Beaver allotments by Lonetree Ranch cattle. The two days of unauthorized use were determined to have occurred during the Labor Day weekend at which time the range rider had been pulled down to Hoop Lake to manage human/cattle conflict at the camp areas. Y2U documented five days of unauthorized use of the Burro Peaks allotment by cattle coming from the Ashley National Forest, Hickerson Park allotment. We have provided the Ashley and Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forests with our final report and the evidence of trespass and unauthorized use including dates, coordinates, ear tag color, brand and photos of the occurrences. The full report can be found here:

<https://www.yellowstoneuintas.org/issues/science/item/82-uinta-cattle-grazing-allotment-monitoring>

Work Plan:

- We will be meeting with both Forests in late April of 2020 to discuss this ongoing issue and demand that something is done to eliminate the trespass and unauthorized use of the Burro Peaks allotment.
- Y2U is looking into legal representation to provide additional pressure on the agencies to eliminate this perennial issue.
- Y2U will continue monitoring the Burro Peaks, Thompson Peak, and West Beaver Allotments that were closed to grazing in the 2003 Forest Plan Decision for trespassing cattle.
- Y2U will report trespass and unauthorized cattle to the Forest Service and permittees as well as continue pressuring the agency to maintain the standards set forth in Annual Operating Instructions (AOIs).

Expected Outcome: Significantly reduce or eliminate trespass and unauthorized use of the closed allotments in the High Uinta Wilderness which will provide a much-needed reprieve for wildlife and other wilderness users from livestock grazing.

Note: Y2U was recently asked by Wilderness Watch to participate in a campaign to permanently close all wilderness areas to livestock grazing. We will provide information and data from the many years of monitoring livestock grazing impacts in the High Uinta Wilderness in support of that effort.

Uintas Wilderness Domestic Sheep –

Status: In June 2014, Y2U submitted scoping comments and in July 2014 supplemental comments on the renewal of 11 sheep grazing permits in the High Uinta Wilderness. Y2U organized a coalition of environmental groups and interested individuals to address these sheep grazing allotments in the High Uinta Wilderness that conflict with native bighorn sheep. We have met with the Regional Forester, Forest Supervisors, and other USFS staff on more than one occasion to delineate our concerns and recommendations. This 175,000-acre area is habitat for Canada lynx, bighorn sheep, black bears, cougars and many other species. It also provides a significant water source for much of Utah. In July of 2018, Dr. John Carter, Y2U Staff Ecologist, presented to the Intermountain Region, Uinta-Wasatch-Cache and Ashley National Forest Supervisors and District Rangers and staff the [Forage Capacity & Stocking Rate Determination For High Uintas Wilderness Domestic Sheep](#), an analysis completed by Y2U and Wild Utah Project, which shows a capacity for stocking at 10 percent of the current rate on these High Uintas Wilderness domestic sheep allotments. On August 2nd, 2019, Y2U and Western Watersheds Project submitted comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and on August 5th, 2019, the above referenced coalition submitted comments on the DEIS. The full set of comments can be found here:

<https://www.yellowstoneuintas.org/issues/science/item/81-high-uinta-wilderness-domestic-sheep>

Work Plan:

- Upon release, Y2U will address whether the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) adequately analyzed the potential environmental impacts of the project and addressed potential alternatives.
- Y2U will file an Objection if the FEIS does not adequately analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and potential alternatives.
- Y2U will be seeking legal representation to litigate the continuation of domestic sheep grazing in the High Uinta Wilderness.
- Prepare articles for media to expose the issues with domestic sheep grazing in the High Uinta Wilderness.

Expected Outcome: Optimistically, the Bighorn Sheep risk analysis will result in Forest Service recommendation to close some allotments. Our work is intended to show the impact of current stocking rates, which are far too high, and designed to put pressure on the Forest Service and permittees to support voluntary permit retirements thru buyouts.

Note: Y2U was recently asked by Wilderness Watch to participate in a campaign to permanently close all wilderness areas to livestock grazing. We will provide information and data from the many years of monitoring livestock grazing impacts in the High Uinta Wilderness in support of that effort.

Winchell Dugway –

Status: Y2U, along with Alliance for the Wild Rockies and Wildlands Defense, submitted comments to the Caribou-Targhee National Forest in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) with regard to a proposed project to build an ATV route between Morgan Meadows and the deserted historic mining town of Caribou City in the Caribou Range. The area is part of the regionally significant wildlife corridor that spans from the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem to the Southern Rockies, and motorized use on the proposed route would further displace wildlife in an area that is already overrun with OHVs/ATVs. In February of 2018, Dr. John Carter, Y2U staff ecologist and Alliance for the Wild Rockies filed an Objection to the Finding of No Significant Impact released in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for this project. Unfortunately, Y2U was unable to secure legal representation to further challenge this project and force the Forest Service to acknowledge and address the impact of this project and the myriad of other OHV/ATV trails in the Corridor.

Work Plan:

- Y2U will monitor the impacts of the new trail on wildlife and habitat in the area.
- Y2U will continue placing pressure on the Forest Service to analyze the impact of the continued exponential growth of OHV/ATV use in our National Forests.

Expected Outcome: OHV/ATV use impacts wildlife and habitat and the Forest Service must consider these impacts when proposing new trails in the already heavily fragmented habitat of our National Forests.