



# Flying to Save the Earth



# 2020

ANNUAL REPORT



# “The earth is what we all have in common.”

—WENDELL BERRY

Dear Fellow Conservationists,

Growing up the daughter of a teacher and stay-at-home parent, I didn't know how lucky I was that we spent every summer—all summer—camping, fishing, backpacking, and exploring the natural wonders of the U.S. We'd pack the station wagon, hitch up the camper, and make sure to throw in library books and our collections of *Ranger Rick* and *World* to keep us entertained on the odyssey that was our migration from Dayton, Ohio, to the wilderness areas and national parks of the West. Once on the open road, my three siblings and I were “free to move about the cabin,” a practice now thankfully replaced with car seats and seat belts. A different time, yes. But the legacy of wild, open spaces and the need to steward them for future generations was a gift given to me by my parents, passed down from theirs, and one I know my own children now carry.

Our 2020 Annual Report showcases a period that started much like any other for LightHawk. We continued our critical work in areas like the Everglades, the Colorado and Delaware rivers, and endangered species transports. It began (and ended) with strong fiscal reserves. The new year featured transition, with Terri Watson moving on (but staying with us as an advisory board member and volunteer pilot) and my coming on board as CEO.

And then the world changed. Like virtually every other nonprofit across the globe, we had to adjust overnight to the realities of Covid-19. If you had asked us in December 2019 what might happen if we could no longer carry passengers, we would have said our flights

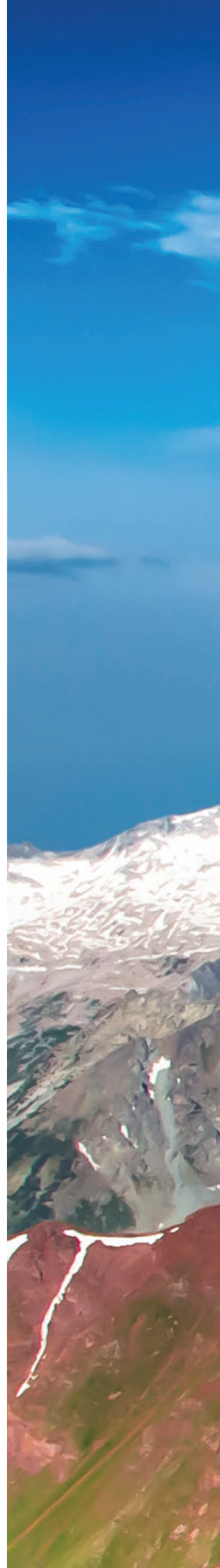
might go to zero. Instead, our team made it work. Thanks to the incredible commitment and resourcefulness of our staff, volunteer pilots, and our partners, we have maintained almost 70% of normal flight activity.

LightHawk's resilience and determination to move forward with our conservation mission in the face of this year's unprecedented events make me so proud to be part of this team—and extremely optimistic about our future.

Of course, none of our work would be possible without you. LightHawk is 100% donor-supported. It is on behalf of, and because of, YOU that we are able to carry out the conservation work we all believe in so strongly. Thank you.

Warmest Regards,

*Michele Rutledge*  
Michele Rutledge





# a year of progress

“I don’t think fosters would have happened this year without LightHawk. They provided the momentum and means that, even in a pandemic, allowed us to push our conservation efforts forward.”

—REGINA MOSSOTTI, Director of Animal Care and Conservation, Endangered Wolf Center; AZA Mexican Wolf SSP Foster Advisor



291

missions coordinated

524

changemakers flown



145

partner organizations supported

29

new volunteer pilots



329

animals safely relocated



17

offspring born from animals we moved

72

media pieces resulting from our flights



334

total volunteer pilots





# Navigating our Waters

EAST TO WEST, WE HAD U.S. COVERED

**From exposing the locations of an aggressive invasive species in the Delaware River watershed to providing a clear-eyed view of impending environmental and public health disasters in California, LightHawk's aerial perspective furnishes scientists, journalists, and decision makers with the information they need to protect our critical waterways.**

## Colorado River: Viewpoint for environmental justice and protection

With Walton Family Foundation support, LightHawk flies dozens of missions annually to advance conservation throughout the Colorado River Basin, including the Salton Sea in California. This desert lake is replenished by agricultural runoff, and while increasingly polluted, it remains an important wetland habitat and a vital part of the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. In 2003, a transfer of water from local agricultural to urban uses resulted in significantly reduced inflow. The lake has since shrunk by 40 square miles, exposing contaminated lakebed sediment, and making the remaining water almost twice as saline and inhospitable to fish. By 2030, up to 100 square miles of dry lakebed may be exposed. Massive toxic dust storms threatening 650,000 Californians may follow, along with the loss of tens of thousands of acres of habitat used by 400 species of birds, including threatened and endangered species, and other wildlife.

In order to facilitate the 2003 water transfer deal, the State of California agreed to undertake habitat restoration projects which would help to control dust. These projects have not been implemented, and that failure to act portends future environmental and public health catastrophes.



Eared grebe



LightHawk is acting, collaborating with local environmental justice organizations like Comité Civico del Valle and with policy experts at Pacific Institute and National Audubon Society. LightHawk "hearts and minds" flight campaigns educated and engaged members of the state of California's Air Resources Board and other key decision makers to support projects that will improve air quality and deliver water to the right places at the right time for people and the environment. Survey flights documented the continued importance of the lake as a migratory bird stopover. And flights also provided an aerial storytelling platform for reporters, photographers, and videographers to advance communication efforts. Since these flights, California's governor signed a state budget including \$47 million for Salton Sea restoration and management projects, and a community emissions reduction plan has gained state support and funding.



“Flights were a key component of showcasing the regression of the Salton Sea. The decision makers’ ability to view the problem from an angle very few have, instead of looking at numbers and data, was a benefit that they mentioned multiple times in their report back to the community at their board hearing.”

— CHRISTIAN TORRES, Special Projects Manager, Comite Civico Del Valle, Inc.



**IN 2020, LIGHTHAWK LEVERAGED OVER 230 FLIGHT HOURS ACROSS 92 MISSIONS TO MONITOR AND PROTECT FRESHWATER ACROSS NORTH AMERICA.**

### **Delaware River Watershed: Exposing the invader weed**

It was a beautiful ornamental plant brought to the United States from rural Japan in the 1840s. *Fallopia japonica*, or Japanese knotweed, was considered a miracle plant that could stabilize dunes and be eaten like rhubarb harvested from your backyard. Today it is known as “Attila the Hun” because of its exceptionally rapid growth and ability to overtake native species in watersheds.

Eradicating a plant that can grow three inches a day in the spring and spread its root system more than 70 feet is challenging, especially when the species’ location is hard to pinpoint. Difficulty delineating knotweed stands in the Delaware River watershed has impeded efforts to limit its relentless spread. Until now.

LightHawk staff worked with the Friends of the Upper Delaware to design a method to locate and measure areas of knotweed for targeted invasive species control. Aerial surveys to gather images with infrared cameras were key to distinguishing this species from other vegetation, allowing us to map the invader’s spread.

This project offered an excellent opportunity for LightHawk to expand its capabilities within the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, supported by the William Penn Foundation. We collaborated on designing flight routes and creating test flights. Our pilots captured imagery with cameras configured to capture knotweed’s unique vegetative signature. The methodology worked: aerial infrared images now make it easier to assess and control this threat to the Delaware River watershed.





# Rising to the Challenge

## WE PLAN FOR UNCERTAINTY

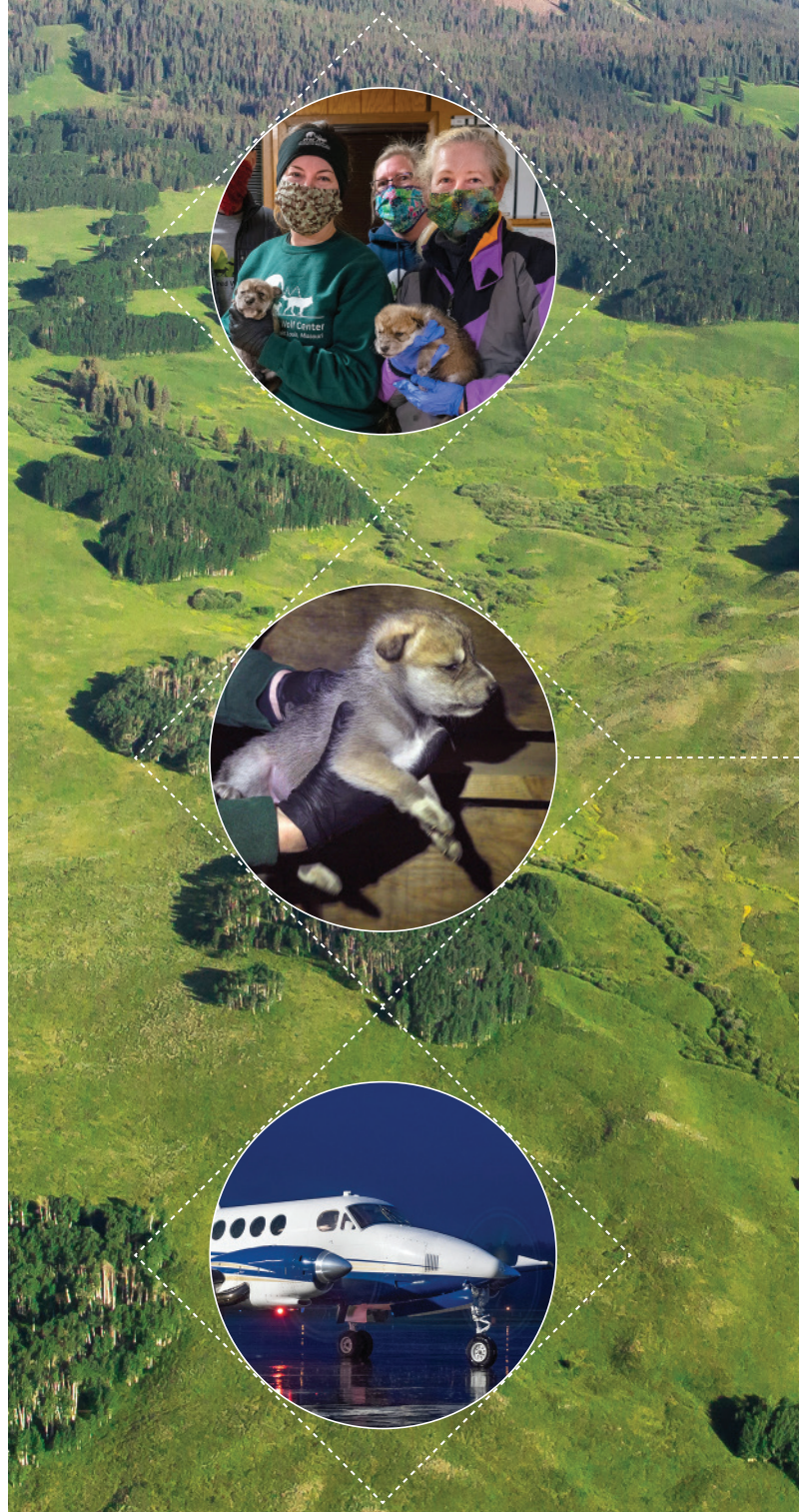
**Transferring newborn captive wolf pups to their wild foster mothers must be done in a matter of hours, at just the right time in their development. Important conservation work can't wait, and in this most unusual year, LightHawk staff and Volunteer Pilot Corps stepped up to meet the moment—and delivered.**

### Supporting the Endangered Mexican Wolf

The Mexican wolf once ranged from central and northern Mexico to western Texas, southern New Mexico, and central Arizona, but by 1976 was listed under the Endangered Species Act. Starting with seven captured wolves, a managed breeding program was established with the goal of expanding the geographic distribution, abundance, and genetic diversity of wolves in the wild in the U.S. and Mexico. In 1998, federal agencies began to release Mexican wolves into the wild in New Mexico and Arizona. Today there are 163 wild Mexican wolves in the United States, along with approximately 35 in the wild in Mexico.

Genetic diversity is critical to the species' long-term survival. LightHawk began working with the Species Survival Program (SSP) ten years ago, transporting adult wolves to captive breeding facilities or to the wild. Shy and timid, wolves typically do not handle shipping well. With faster and more customized flights, LightHawk provides a safer and less stressful transportation option. A key strategy of the SSP is to breed genetically important captive adults, and then introduce their captive-born pups into wild dens to improve diversity of wild populations, a method known as cross-fostering. In 2020, LightHawk successfully transported 7 pups to join their wild foster mothers.

Cross-foster flights require precise coordination between LightHawk program staff, captive facilities, and the volunteer pilot to ensure the safest and most comfortable trip for these pups, as well as the briefest separation time between



mothers. Pilots fly in the night before, wake before dawn to meet partners and load animals, and cover distances in four to eight hours that would otherwise require long connecting flights and layovers.

### Operating During Covid-19

For over 40 years, LightHawk has offered people the opportunity to gain a new perspective on their world. Whether it is a flight to educate decision makers about an issue, for reporters to gain perspective that will inform their stories, for photographers to gather stunning images, or for scientists to gather data, LightHawk has made this





**SINCE 2010, LIGHTHAWK HAS FLOWN 57 WOLVES, WHICH PRODUCED 37 OFFSPRING, AND 17 WERE EVENTUALLY RELEASED TO THE WILD.**

experience possible. Consequently, more than 99% of our flights involve passengers.

In March 2020, in the early weeks of Covid-19's appearance in the U.S., LightHawk made the decision to suspend operations involving passengers to ensure that our flights would not contribute to the global pandemic. With our normal way of doing business unavailable, we faced a crossroads: stop all flights until the end of the pandemic or adapt to the new reality. Fortunately, our staff was ready to meet the challenge. Within a week, we had developed a new framework for advancing conservation.

Even without passengers, we continued to make critical flights to promptly deliver endangered wolf pups to their wild foster mothers, track wildlife populations, and we captured compelling video and images using cameras mounted to airplanes. Highly invasive Japanese knotweed did not escape the watchful eyes of our GoPro camera systems flying over the Delaware River watershed. And in a truly innovative turn, we partnered with SkyTruth to combine artificial intelligence assessments of remote-sensed data with aircraft-based observations to allow our land trust partners to monitor their conservation easements safely, efficiently, and effectively.



“Once again,  
LightHawk  
saved the day.”

—JACKIE FALLON, Lake Superior Zoo



## It takes 3!

DONORS, PILOTS, AND STAFF

Ecologists use words like “apex predators” and “keystone species” to convey interrelatedness. In the LightHawk ecosystem, the forward momentum which moves conservation efforts comes from the connectedness between our donors, volunteer pilots, and our staff. In LightHawk’s 41-year history, this connectedness has been central to our resilience and longevity.

At our core, we are a conservation organization that leverages the power of aviation to protect the environment. Our donors are central: they both inspire and support our mission. LightHawk’s volunteer pilots are critical to our work, donating their skills, time, and flight expenses to help us reach our conservation goals. Our staff are the integrators: with their conservation expertise we can take the support of our donors and turn it into wins for the environment.

## Donor Spotlight



**Ralph Britton**  
California

Embodying the true spirit of philanthropy, Britton gives both time and treasure to further LightHawk’s conservation efforts. Ralph recently retired from decades of flying, including over 10 years as a LightHawk volunteer pilot. He is also a dedicated donor to LightHawk. “As a donor, I have seen my investment in LightHawk returned many times over. Some of my most satisfying LightHawk flights have been radio-tracking endangered California condors. I know that my donation supports LightHawk staff in building the partnerships and coordinating the flights that helped our partners achieve notable success in reintroducing these magnificent birds into the wild.”





## Stephanie Wells

Colorado

Among other accomplishments, Wells is a retired NASA pilot and training officer. A LightHawk volunteer pilot since 2012, she also serves as a Volunteer Pilot Mentor and advisory board member. "The aerial perspective is imperative to changing hearts and minds. I love that my volunteer work contributes toward better understanding of the environmental threats to our world."

## Pilot Spotlight



## Rudy Engholm

Florida

An active conservationist particularly interested in protecting watersheds from Maine to Florida, Engholm has been a volunteer pilot for over 30 years. "I am glad to continue to donate my aviation expertise to support the awareness and the attention a LightHawk flight brings to Everglades restoration, coastline erosion, and invasive species devastation."



## Staff Spotlight



**Esther Duke, MSc**  
Colorado

As Western Program Director, Duke is responsible for leading LightHawk's Colorado River, California Condor Recovery and Salmon Flagship projects. Duke brings 15 years of applied conservation social science experience and a lifetime of love of the outdoors to her leadership.



**Jonathan Milne, MSc**  
Maine

LightHawk's Eastern Program Director, Milne stewards the Delaware River and Everglades Flagship projects. His ecological expertise comes from several decades as a park ranger, and he brings his passion for conservation planning, mapping, and aviation, to his work.



**Audrey Ek-Psomas, MS**  
New Mexico

As Eastern Program Coordinator, Ek-Psomas works with volunteer pilots and partners to plan flights and put these projects into action. An avid hiker and outdoorsperson, Ek-Psomas brings a vibrant environmental perspective to LightHawk.



# LightHawk Pilots

Our volunteer pilots dedicated their skill, aircraft, fuel and resources toward LightHawk's conservation vision.

Nadim Abuhaidar	Thomas Dillon	Hal Hayden	Tom LeCompte	Bill Nicolai	Mike Schroeder
David Acker	Andy Dunigan	Jeff Hazlett	Michael Lee	Jane Nicolai	Merry Schroeder
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Steve Brown	Bob Gill	Joe Keeton	Wayne McClelland	Dave Riffle	Tim Taylor
Tom Bryant	Martin Goldfarb	Chris Keithley	Bruce McLean	Pat Riley	Bob Thomas
James Buck	Donald Goodman	Bob Keller	Mike McNamara	Kevin Roache	Zach Thomas
Greg Burnett	Reg Goodwin	Steve Kent	Kathrynne	Steve Robbins	Dan Thompson
Jim Cameron	Pete Gordon	Alan Kinback	McPherson	Leon Robert	Art Thompson
Tony Carson	Shane Gorman	John King	Bill Menzel	Lisa Robertson	Mac Tichenor
Linda Chism	Lane Gormley	Martha King	Mark Merrill	Jim Robinson	Tom Tillman
John Chlopek	Kelly Gottlieb	Steve Kiss	Jack Merritt	Nelson Ronsvalle	Tim Timmons
Scott Cianchette	Jim Grady	Jim Knowles	Steve Meyer	Chuck Rosenfeld	Tim Toal
Bob Cipolli	Eric Grant	Rick Koril	Wolfgang Meyn	Jane Rosevelt	Val Tollefson
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David Cole	Rich Greenawald	Jason Kozak	Doug Monger	Rob Ross	Kelly Trigg-
Peter Coltman	Howard Greenberg	Dave Krahn	Tony Moradian	Polly Ross	Grossetete
Dave Comarow	David Grimm	David Kunkel	David Morrison	Jim Roswell	Marijke Unger
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Keith Ward  
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Peter Watkins  
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Rich Wellner  
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Brian Williams  
John Wilson  
Brent Witters  
Aron Wolf  
Will Worthington  
Alan Wright  
Chuck Yanke  
Scott Young  
Andy Young  
Mark Zaller

## Flown West

### *In Memoriam*

Jo Duffy  
Jeffrey Weiss

## Pilot Anniversaries

### PLATINUM FLYERS—15 YEARS

Gregory Burnett  
Dan Evans  
John Feagin  
Eric Fogelin  
Doug Monger  
Will Worthington

### 25 YEARS

Allen Low  
Jane Nicolai

### 30 YEARS

Skip Slyfield



## Pilot Awards

Every year we present awards at our Annual Fly-In to recognize our dedicated volunteer pilots.

### SPIRIT OF LIGHTHAWK AWARD

#### Bill Rush

Awarded to a pilot who ranks among the highest in total hours, is outstanding to work with, and represents the very best of our pilot corps.

### BILL & BETTY ROCKWELL AWARD

#### Steve Kent

Awarded to a pilot who embodies the generous spirit and flexibility of Bill Rockwell, an unselfish soul always willing to fly the extra mile.

### ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

#### Steve Meyer

Awarded to a pilot who joined LightHawk during the preceding year and immediately began making significant contributions to the organization.

### CARPENTER AWARD

#### Will Worthington

Awarded to the pilot who flew the most in service of LightHawk in their own aircraft during the prior year.

### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

#### Mike Venturino

Awarded to a pilot who embodies the true spirit of volunteerism, going above and beyond the call of duty, with contagious enthusiasm and exemplary skills.





# Our Donors

## \$70,000 AND ABOVE

Cornell Douglas Foundation  
Thomas W. Haas Foundation  
Walton Family Foundation  
William Penn Foundation

## \$25,000 TO \$69,999

Appleby Foundation  
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The Eucalyptus Foundation  
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The Wildlife Forever Fund  
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## \$1,000 TO \$4,999

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Amy Woodworth  
Sandy and Will Worthington

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#### WINGS OF LIGHTHAWK

*These monthly donors provide reliable year-round support that keeps us soaring higher*

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#### LIGHTHAWK'S LEGACY SOCIETY

Legacy Society members have notified us of their intention to make a future gift to LightHawk through their will or estate plan.

Greg Bedinger and Jan Mulder  
Christopher and Jennifer Boyer  
Robert and Susan Crenshaw  
Rudy and Grace Engholm  
Bob and Rose Francella  
Jeff and Martha Hamilton  
Jay and Louise Noyes  
Ginny Paul  
Lisa and Steve Robertson  
Polly Ross  
Bud Sittig  
Beverly Steveson  
Terri Watson and Kimi Harrison  
Brian Williams

For information and assistance on planned giving, please contact our Chief Advancement Officer at 970-797-9355, extension 2.

#### GIVING IN HONOR OF

John and Paula Foy in honor of Rudy Engholm  
Karen Freeberg in honor of Daniel Freeberg  
Kelly and Michael Gottlieb in honor of Linda and Donald Silpe  
Kelly and Michael Gottlieb in honor of Jamie Stern and Steve Brown  
Kelly and Michael Gottlieb in honor of Joan and Michael Salke  
Brook Lenker in honor of FracTracker's Ted Auch  
David Matthews in honor of Merry Schroeder  
Deborah Mitchell in honor of Alan Kinback  
Majken Ryherd in honor of Mike James and Mike Ryherd  
Amy Woodworth in honor of David Kunkel

#### GIVING IN MEMORY OF

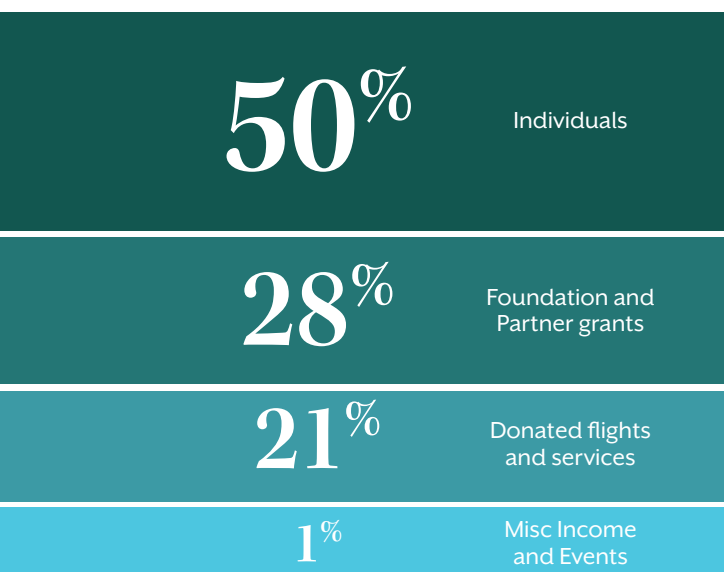
Kerry Albright in memory of Jim Roush  
Bob and Rose Francella in memory of Frank J. "Reds" Francella  
Mary Kaye O'Neill in memory of Eugene (Gene) Steffen  
Hazel Patton in memory of Mark Roberts  
Ginny Paul in memory of Steve Paul  
Rona Sheramy in memory of Norman Best  
Lawrence and Fran Sittig in memory of Steve Paul



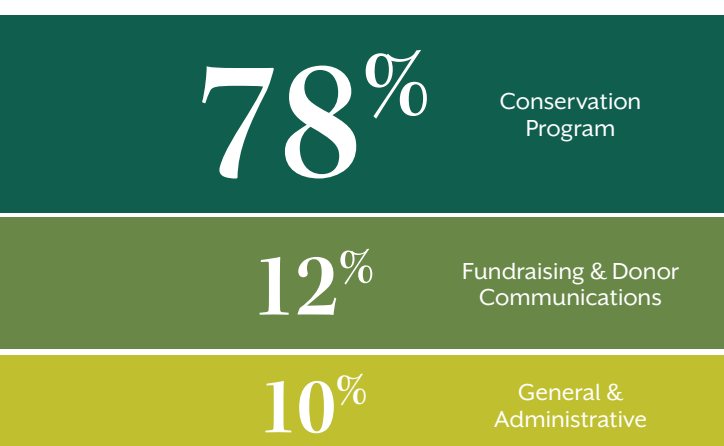
## OUR FINANCES

LightHawk's financials reflect our donors' commitment to long term, sustained investment in conservation results. Many of our donors have been part of LightHawk for ten or more years and are increasingly making multi-year commitments. In Fiscal Year 2020 we received a 10-year gift totalling \$1M which is a significant cornerstone of our financial stability. Knowing that we can count on a continuous income stream enables us to address both ongoing conservation challenges and emerging, urgent issues. Every dollar counts and LightHawk's spending reflects our dedication to transforming those dollars into conservation **wins**.

### PERCENTAGE OF CONTRIBUTIONS BY SOURCE



### PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PROGRAMMATIC EXPENSES



### Statement of Activities for the year ending on March 31, 2020

#### REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Individual contributions	\$1,226,779
Organizational contributions	\$514,059
Donated flight services and materials	\$690,600
Other revenue, events, interest and dividends	\$26,945
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on endowment investments	(\$68,261)

**Total Revenue and Support** **\$2,390,122**

#### EXPENSE

Program—LightHawk costs	\$806,042
Program—Volunteer Pilot donated flights	\$647,134
Fundraising and donor communications	\$218,409
General and administration	\$186,054

**Total Expense** **\$1,857,639**

**Change in Net Assets** **\$532,483**

Net assets, beginning of year	\$2,054,261
Net assets, end of year	\$2,586,744

### Statement of Financial Position for the year ending on March 31, 2020

#### ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$721,042
Unconditional promises to give	\$227,416
Long term promise to give	\$800,000
Prepaid expenses	\$55,180
Endowment investments	\$839,542
Property and equipment	\$693

**Total Assets** **\$2,643,873**

#### LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$57,129
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**Total Liabilities** **\$57,129**

#### NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$535,678
Temporarily restricted	\$1,516,946
Permanently restricted	\$534,120

**Total Net Assets** **\$2,586,744**

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets** **\$2,643,873**

Note: These financial statements are unaudited. Audited Financial Statements and IRS form 990 are available on our website [www.lighthawk.org](http://www.lighthawk.org) or may be obtained by writing LightHawk, PO Box 913239, Denver, CO 80291



## OUR CONSERVATION PARTNERS

We search North America for the most effective conservation organizations that are doing meaningful work that can be greatly enhanced by aviation. Each year we engage more than 100 partners in project-based work, which results in nearly 300 flights, each with measurable benefits for nature.

Agricultural Stewardship Association  
American Rivers  
Arizona Land and Water Trust  
Artists in Residence in Everglades  
Aspen Valley Land Trust  
Audubon California  
Audubon Pennsylvania  
Be Reel Pictures  
Binder Park Zoo  
Black River Outdoor Education Program  
Brian Kelley, Video Producer  
Bronx River Alliance  
Calgary Zoo  
Calusa Waterkeeper  
Carlton Ward, Photographer  
Carlyle Calhoun, Freelance Journalist  
Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies  
Centro de Investigación Científica y de  
Educación Superior de Ensenada,  
Baja California  
Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden  
Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection  
Coastal Alliance to Protect Our Environment  
Coastal Watershed Institute  
Colorado Natural Heritage Program  
Colorado Open Lands  
Colorado West Land Trust  
Columbia Land Conservancy  
Columbia Land Trust  
Comite Civico del Valle  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Crooked River Watershed Council  
Delaware Highlands Conservancy  
Department of Natural Resources—Maryland  
E&E News  
Eastern Sierra Land Trust  
Endangered Wolf Center  
Environmentally Concerned Citizens  
of South Central Michigan  
Florida Wildlife Corridor  
Flying Magazine  
FracTracker Alliance  
Friends of Casco Bay  
Friends of the Upper Delaware River  
Friends of the Verde River  
Galveston Bay Foundation  
Grand Riverkeeper  
Greater Hells Canyon Council  
Greater Rivers Habitat Alliance  
Hawks Aloft  
Heart of the Rockies Initiative

Institute for Bird Populations  
International League of  
Conservation Photographers  
Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine  
Research Reserve  
J Henry Fair, Photographer  
Jon Waterman, Photographer  
Kansas City Zoo  
King County Department of Natural Resources  
Lindsay Fendt, Freelance Journalist  
Long Live The Kings  
Los Angeles Zoo & Botanical Gardens  
Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership  
Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust  
Metro Richmond Zoo  
Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Missouri Confluence Waterkeeper  
Mono Lake Committee  
National Audubon Society  
National Geographic Magazine  
National Geographic Society  
National Marine Sanctuaries  
New Hampshire Audubon  
New Jersey Conservation Foundation  
New Jersey Highlands Coalition  
New York Times  
North Carolina King Tides Project  
North Country Public Radio  
Northwest Fisheries Science Center  
No Water No Life  
Oasis Bird Observatory  
Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition  
Oregon State University  
Oregon Wild  
Oregon Zoo  
Pacific Institute  
Pacific Rivers  
Peninsula Open Space Trust  
Pinnacles National Park  
Point Blue Conservation Science  
PublicSource  
Puget Soundkeeper  
Raise the River  
Resource Renewal Institute  
Ricketts Conservation Foundation  
Albuquerque BioPark Zoo  
RiversEdge West  
Rogue Riverkeeper  
Rutgers University  
San Diego Zoo Global

San Francisco Baykeeper  
Santa Barbara Zoo  
Save The River, Upper St Lawrence  
River Keeper  
Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility  
Shattil/Rozinski Photography  
Sonoran Institute  
Southern Interior Land Trust  
State of New Jersey Office of Climate  
Resilience Planning  
Steven DeWitt Photography  
Stroud Water Research Center  
Surfrider Foundation  
The Bay Foundation  
The Everglades Foundation  
The Ladder Ranch  
The Land Conservancy of New Jersey  
The Nature Conservancy—Arizona  
The Nature Conservancy—Colorado  
The Nature Conservancy—Illinois  
The Nature Conservancy—Maine  
The Nature Conservancy—Maryland  
The Nature Conservancy—Mississippi  
River Basin  
The Nature Conservancy—Nevada  
The Nature Conservancy—Worldwide  
The Peregrine Fund  
The Redford Center  
The Shortridge Coastal Center—  
Bates College  
Tookany/Tacony—Frankford  
Watershed Partnership  
Traverse Image LLC  
Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust  
University of Colorado—Center for  
Environmental Journalism  
University of Colorado—Denver  
University of Maine  
Upper Valley Land Trust  
USDA Forest Service  
Walton Family Foundation  
Washington Forest Law Center  
Waterkeeper Alliance  
Western Colorado Alliance for  
Community Action  
Wildlands Restoration Volunteers  
Wild Salmon Center  
William Penn Foundation  
Wolf Conservation Center  
Wolf Haven International  
Woodie Wheaton Land Trust



## LIGHTHAWK STAFF

### Michele Rutledge

Chief Executive Officer

### Chelsea Baird

Development & Administrative Assistant

### Ryan Boggs

Chief Program Officer

### Esther Duke

Western Program Director

### Audrey Ek-Psomas

Eastern Program Coordinator

### Jonathan Milne

Eastern Program Director

### Lee Pagni

Interim Chief Advancement Officer

### Emilie Ryan

Chief Financial Officer

### Christine Steele

Western Program Coordinator

## LIGHTHAWK STAFF WHO LEFT LAST YEAR

### Bob Francella

Chief Advancement Officer

### Betsy Mortensen

Marketing / Communications Coordinator

### Terri Watson

Chief Executive Officer

## LIGHTHAWK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**James R. Becker**, Bolton MA

**Norissa Giangola**, Miami Beach FL

**David Kunkel**, Treasurer, Boulder CO

**Josh Marvil**, Yarmouth ME

**Lawrence "Bud" Sittig**, Chair, Centennial CO

**Erin Tripp**, Denver CO

**Philip Walker**, Washington DC

**Will Worthington**, Carefree AZ

## LIGHTHAWK ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Barry Baker**, Fort Collins CO

**Brent Blue**, Jackson WY

**Russell Cowart**, Fort Collins CO

**Rick Durden**, Bonners Ferry ID

**C. Rudy Engholm**, Lake Wales FL

**Tom McMurray**, Jackson WY

**Sally Ranney**, Aspen CO

**Michael Sutton**, Carmel Valley CA

**Stephanie Wells**, Arvada CO

**Brian Williams**, UAE



## OUR MISSION

LightHawk accelerates conservation success through the powerful perspective of flight.

LightHawk works to accelerate the pace of conservation across the US, Mexico and Canada. We choose to work in places where our unique perspective can make the greatest impact. The places where we have chosen to put the most effort are our Flagship Projects:

The Everglades

Delaware River

Colorado River Basin

California Condor

Salmon

## PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Most of the photographs in this year's annual report were taken on LightHawk flights.

**Front and back cover:** Jerry Clark/LightHawk

**Pages 2-3:** Jerry Clark/LightHawk

**Pages 4-5:** Jay Calderon/Desert Sun/LightHawk

**Page 4 inset photos:** top: Augenstern; middle: Daniel Dunca; bottom: HeavyT Photography

**Page 5 inset photo:** D L Kugler

**Pages 6-7:** Background: Jerry Clark/LightHawk

**Page 6 inset photos:** Regina Mossotti/Endangered Wolf Center

**Page 7 inset photos:** left: Mike Schroeder; center: Arizona Game and Fish Department; right: Rebecca Bose, Wolf Conservation Center

**Pgs 8-9:** Jerry Clark/LightHawk

**Pgs 10-11:** Richard Hamilton Smith/LightHawk

**Page 15:** MJ Tierney



LightHawk has been completely carbon neutral since 2007



IUCN Member since 2016



GuideStar Gold Seal of Transparency

## GET IN TOUCH WITH LIGHTHAWK

LightHawk is headquartered in Fort Collins, Colorado

Mail Service: PO Box 913239, Denver, CO 80291

info@lighthawk.org • www.lighthawk.org • 970-797-9355



lighthawk



lighthawk.org



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