

# A YEAR OF RESILIENCE

# 2021

Climate

Oceans

Landscapes

Coastlines

Waterways

Species Survival

# FOCUS ON RESILIENCE KEEPS LIGHTHAWK FLYING

Dear fellow conservationists,

Like other anniversaries, the occasion of an Annual Report offers the opportunity to reflect on the passage of time and a reckoning of impact. For LightHawk, fiscal year 2021 – a second year shaped by Covid-19 – was a time of responsiveness, flexibility and of continued flights that accelerated conservation outcomes for change-makers, habitat and landscape monitoring, and endangered species.

It was a year marked by loss, too. The LightHawk family was not untouched by the pandemic and we lost 10 friends, leaders and pilots, including our Board Chair, Brigadier General Lawrence ‘Bud’ Sittig.

When I wrote last year’s introduction, I was naive enough to imagine that by this time this year, the world would be back to business as usual. And at some levels, it is. We ended the period flying over 90% of missions compared to the previous year. New volunteer pilots joined our ranks and we gained another director on our board. We’ve welcomed new staff and gratefully thanked retiring staff. We flew in support of our critical Flagship Projects in the Delaware, Everglades and Colorado River and coastal missions evaluating climate change and drought. LightHawk flights made impactful “just in time” differences in endangered species transports, filling a critical gap created when other options were not available. We are fiscally sound and entering into a thoughtful strategic planning process to propel our next 40-plus years to sustainability.

Our flight path may encounter some continued “rough air” ahead – but we’ve weathered the current storm well and are prepared for the future thanks to support from people like you. LightHawk is 100% donor-supported. Thank you for your trust in us and for believing in our conservation mission.

With warm regards,

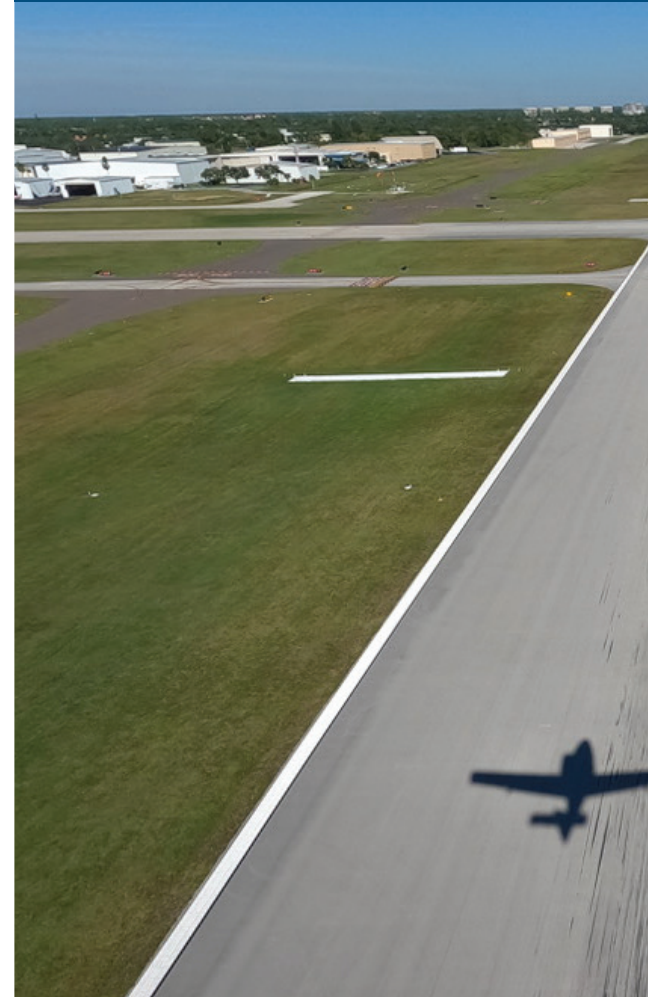
Michele Rutledge,  
Chief Executive Officer



**219**  
MISSIONS  
COORDINATED



**32**  
NEW  
VOLUNTEER  
PILOTS



**683**  
EASEMENTS  
MONITORED



**1,240+**  
HOURS SAVED  
FOR PARTNERS



**17,488**  
ANIMALS  
TRANSPORTED



**95**  
PARTNER  
ORGANIZATIONS  
SUPPORTED



**32**  
HOURS SAVED  
PER FLIGHT  
HOUR FOR  
PARTNERS



**46**  
MEDIA MENTIONS  
RESULTING FROM  
LIGHTHAWK  
FLIGHTS

# LIGHTHAWK FINDS WAYS TO ADAPT TO NEW CHALLENGES

Dear donors, partners, volunteer pilots and colleagues,

While 2021 saw this country and the world facing many problems and issues, it has become clear that one of the biggest, most complicated and long-term challenges is preserving a habitable environment. The need to reduce the devastating impact of climate change and degradation of the natural world has never been more important. Never has LightHawk's mission of conservation been more urgent or timely. Never has your involvement with LightHawk been more crucial.

In fulfilling LightHawk's mission this past year, the leadership, staff and volunteer pilot corps displayed impressive determination, creativity and resilience, achieving significant conservation outcomes and flying over 90% of the number of missions flown the previous year. It has not been easy. Many of our pilots could not fly and we could not carry our partners as passengers. We lost Bud Sittig, our board chair, and my good friend, to Covid-19. LightHawk moved to a totally distributed organization model with staff in nine different states. We spent a lot of time on video calls.

Despite these obstacles, LightHawk continued to prove that aviation can advance conservation in many ways. Our team developed new techniques for video monitoring and improving endangered species transport, just to mention a few. We also added new senior staff, pilots and board members. At this critical time, LightHawk is now positioned to grow and play an even larger role in protecting the environment. We couldn't do that without your continued support, which we greatly value and appreciate.

Take care and stay safe.

Jim Becker  
LightHawk Board of Directors Chairperson

# LIGHTHAWK'S YEAR OF RESILIENCE

The 2020-2021 year was one characterized by resilience for LightHawk. The organization faced new challenges and also focused more heavily on work around climate resilience. As climate change creates new and lasting impacts on our environment, it is important to work toward conservation strategies to support a sustainable future for humans and other species.

In the same way, LightHawk was forced to adapt the way it flies missions in a year which saw significant barriers to normal operations due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. Flights that once had scientist passengers were now being flown solo with mounted high-definition cameras collecting important data for later review. The conditions of the past year required LightHawk to find new ways to accomplish conservation goals while maintaining the safety of both our volunteer pilots and partners.

We were also able to fly a significant number of endangered species to new homes throughout the year. From California condors to Mexican and red wolves, LightHawk pilots helped preserve endangered species and return them to their natural habitats. As climate change continues to impact the natural homes for these species, LightHawk's ability to quickly and safely transport endangered wildlife will become increasingly valuable for species survival.

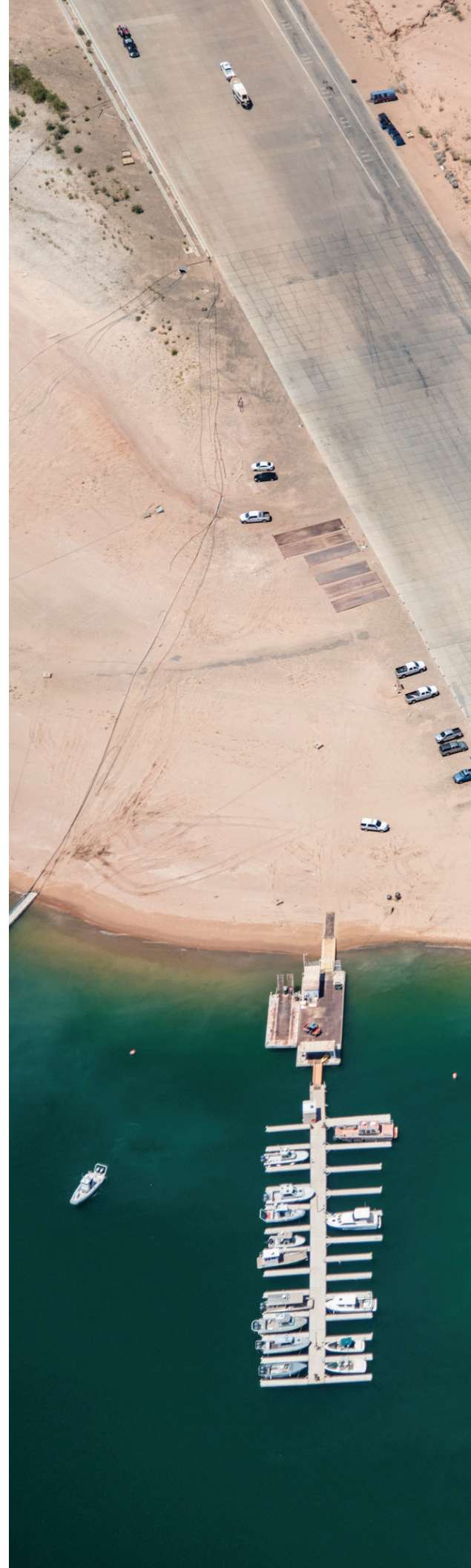
The lessons learned this year will allow LightHawk to improve its resilience, continue flying missions and keep saving the world, one flight at a time.

## CLIMATE

The effects of climate change are impacting the environment in many ways. As species adapt to new climate realities, they shift locations in search of more suitable habitat and food. Preserving a wide range of environments is important to promote a diversity of plants and animals. Community planners, scientists, and decision makers must consider changing environmental conditions as they develop long-range plans for growth and sustainability.

## CONSERVING LANDSCAPES

Healthy landscapes are crucial to our well-being and nature's ability to thrive. LightHawk flies to conserve critical and sensitive landscapes, their ecosystems and the wildlife that call them home both now and in the future. We address threats that would cause damage, advocate for science-based land management and seek to increase the amount of public and private land conserved to be enjoyed by current and future generations.





## WATERWAYS

Rivers and wetlands form a network of life that flows through our lands and communities. We fly to keep those waters and their natural ecosystems healthy, and keep human communities thriving. We work to restore altered river systems to their native states, protect them from pollution, sedimentation and diversion, and safeguard the integrity of our drinking water.

## OCEANS/COASTLINES

Thriving oceans and coastlines are home to incredible life and provide a bounty of food and other benefits for humans. LightHawk missions fly to protect sensitive coastlines, estuaries, oceans and sea life. The flights monitor the health of marine protected areas, work to increase safeguards, show the existing and potential impacts of climate change and shine a light on pollution or other damage to these life-sustaining areas. Coastal community planners use this information to plan for sea level rise and identify critical public infrastructure (roads, bridges, water, and sewer systems, etc.) that may be in harm's way and require long-term planning.

## SPECIES SURVIVAL

Protecting endangered animals from extinction is our enduring responsibility. In cases where human intervention is required for populations to recover, animals must be transported between captive breeding or rehabilitation centers and the wild. Each animal is incredibly valuable because of their limited numbers and amount of effort invested. Having safe and efficient transportation that minimizes stress to the animals is a key component to recovery programs.

# PROGRAMS YEAR IN REVIEW

Covid-19 created challenges for both our organization as well as for our partners. With a focus on resilience, we added new tools to our toolbox. Together with LightHawk volunteer pilots, we developed new methods of data and imagery collection, benefiting our partners both now and into the future. Our missions covered a wide range of conservation goals and contributed to the survival of endangered species.

LightHawk's most significant accomplishments this year were in our work on California Condor recovery, White Abalone transports, the mega-drought's impact on the Colorado River Basin, easement monitoring, video/imagery collection for partner fundraising efforts and Mexican and red wolf transports.

## CALIFORNIA CONDOR RECOVERY

LightHawk's work with partners in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's California Condor Recovery Program was more critical than ever this year. With field biologists' activities severely limited due to Covid-19 restrictions, several aerial telemetry flights enabled staff with the Santa Barbara Zoo and Pinnacles National Park to locate 47 birds, including several that had been missing for weeks. We also successfully transported four juveniles from Idaho's Peregrine Fund to be released into the wild in California. And with just one day's notice, we were able to transport a condor with a broken leg from the Peregrine Fund to a veterinary specialist several

*"I want to start off by saying thank you so much to everyone involved in helping our California condor, Takihin (#139). LightHawk is an amazing partner to have and we could not have gotten her to Pullman so smoothly without them."*



*— Leah Medley  
Propagation Specialist at The Peregrine Fund*



hundred miles away for emergency surgery. LightHawk pilots flew with radio telemetry gear and mounted cameras to help scientists track birds tagged with radio transmitters. This allowed scientists to continue monitoring condors during periods when LightHawk could not fly them as passengers.

All of these flights were extremely valuable for the survival of this important species. Without LightHawk, it would be very difficult for our partners to locate missing condors, transport birds to be released and get injured birds to veterinarians.



The mega-drought facing the west has left Lake Mead at record low levels. From left: 1. Redington Mountain 2. California condor 3. Conservation easement monitoring 4. White Abalone 5. Mexican wolf

## WHITE ABALONE

For a few hours this year, there were more white abalone in the sky than were left in the ocean. Five flights in partnership with The Bay Foundation and UC Davis' Bodega Marine Lab successfully transported a total of 16,402 endangered white abalone to Southern California for release in restored kelp forests and rocky reefs where they will contribute to the recovery of their species. The Bay Foundation's Southern California White Abalone Restoration Project is part of a statewide collaboration dedicated to the restoration of federally endangered white abalone. Once a key player as grazers and ecosystem engineers in coastal waters ranging from

Point Conception, California to Baja California, Mexico, white abalone are a NOAA "Species in the Spotlight" – one of eight species considered among the most at risk of extinction in the near future. Abalone graze on kelp plants that inhabit some of the most productive and biodiverse places on the planet. While this grazing may seem harmful, it actually increases kelp diversity by clearing patches of rocky surface so that multiple kelp species can flourish. The increase in kelp diversity translates to an increase in diversity of fish and other animals that depend on kelp forest habitat. LightHawk's flights allow biologists to release white abalone into the wild and increase much-needed biodiversity in our oceans.



*"The chance of the abalone surviving transport was greatly increased by LightHawk flying the abalone from Sonoma County to San Diego. If it wasn't for LightHawk, we would*

*have had to drive the animals which can result in higher mortality due to the long duration of the drive."*

*– Kathy Swiney  
NOAA SW Fisheries Science Center*

## MEGADROUGHT AND WESTERN WATER RESOURCES

Climate change associated megadroughts throughout the Western United States are resulting in an urgent water crisis for millions of people. Mismanagement and unsustainable use are depleting linked, underground aquifers faster than they can be replenished. This is especially true in already over-allocated river systems like the Colorado River, where decreasing flows and continued population growth are pushing the system to the brink.

LightHawk is working throughout the basin to improve communication and inform decision-making about water resources to benefit people and the environment. In 2020 with conservation scientists and journalists grounded during the pandemic, LightHawk got creative with mounted camera systems to capture photos and video of critical water issues. This included LightHawk pilots gathering imagery for a Water for Arizona Coalition video production about industrial farming impacts in western Arizona (La Paz and Mohave counties) where unregulated and unmeasured

groundwater pumping is occurring. Flights also led to an article that ran in The Guardian Newspapers, titled "Mega-dairies, disappearing wells, and Arizona's deepening water crisis." LightHawk pilots documented the area of the proposed Lake Powell pipeline and drought-impacted areas of the headwaters of the Colorado River, Lake Powell, Lake Mead, Yampa and Green Rivers with American Rivers and The Water Desk, an organization dedicated to increasing the volume, depth and power of journalism connected to Western water issues. Finally, a suite of flights over the Verde River with The Nature Conservancy will be featured in a virtual aerial tour of the river to engage diverse partners in the Valley of the Sun (Phoenix Metro area) to invest in the health of their watershed.

## LIGHTHAWK AND NORTHEAST WILDERNESS TRUST



Faced with the daunting prospect of raising critical funds during a pandemic, the Northeast Wilderness Trust turned to LightHawk to help raise nearly \$1 million for land preservation in western Maine. LightHawk's volunteer pilot flew over Redington Mountain to gather high-quality video that was used in a fundraising production featured on our partner's website, in an electronic newsletter and a social media fundraising campaign. "We're pleased to report that we have now

*"We worked closely with Lighthawk to successfully execute a pair of video projects this past year by mounting remote-controlled cameras outside the plane and flying the routes we needed. Lighthawk continually prioritizes the need to get these compelling images for our work, and is always enthusiastic to help in any way they can. In short, Lighthawk is an excellent partner for our conservation communications needs."*

*– Sinjin Eberle  
American Rivers*



met our funding goal for that project and the video footage was a wonderful component, inspiring donors to give by bringing to life the landscape their funds would protect in a way that words and still imagery could not,” said Northeast Wilderness Trust Outreach Coordinator Sophia Veltrop.

Redington Mountain is a unique habitat that is a part of a 170,000-acre forest block in the high peaks region of the state. Securing this landscape helped protect a rare forest type known as Heart-Leaved Birch Subalpine Forest. These forests are also critical for species such as the Canada lynx, moose and black bear. The 2.7 miles of streams are critical for ensuring that endangered Atlantic Salmon and native Brook trout have suitable habitat for breeding. In an era of climate change concerns, the 3,400-acre Redington Wilderness Sanctuary will also provide significant carbon capture capacity as the forests continue to grow.

## CONSERVATION EASEMENT MONITORING

While raising money for land acquisitions was complicated, imagine trying to monitor 675 conservation easements during a year when staff was limited in their ability to conduct annual monitoring because of concerns around Covid-19. LightHawk teamed up with the Columbia Land Conservancy and the Upper Valley Land Trust to do just that. In this challenging year, we monitored over 85,000 acres of conserved lands, saving both partners a combined 1,326 hours of staff time. With each hour of flight we conducted, we saved nearly 32 hours of conservation partner staff time. In dollars, LightHawk’s involvement saved these two partners more than \$32,000. We didn’t stop there either. In convening both partners, we were also able to create a new protocol for aerial monitoring with video technology that will be useful for conservation partners across the country.

## WOLVES

Mexican wolves were considered extinct in the wild until their reintroduction in 1998 in Arizona and New Mexico. Over the past decade, LightHawk has transported a total of 98 Mexican wolves for breeding and release into the wild in an effort to increase the population and maintain the genetic diversity of this recovering, but still endangered, wild population. Until last year, wolves transported by LightHawk were almost all adults. In 2020, we embarked on an exciting new part of the process, flying captive-born pups for placement into wild dens. This practice is called cross-fostering. A



*“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 conservation efforts forward. Their efforts were incredibly impressive. This was an epic success. Not only did we manage to somehow still foster during a world-wide pandemic, but we broke the record for pups placed into the wild.”*

*Regina Mossotti  
Director of Animal Care and Conservation  
Endangered Wolf Center*

month before whelping (births) began, the United States began closing down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Eighteen female Mexican wolves at facilities throughout the country were pregnant with litters available to foster into the wild. With commercial flights canceling nationwide, LightHawk became essential in making cross-fostering possible by providing customized flights to minimize the amount of time the pups are away from a mother. Despite myriad challenges, in the spring of 2020, one LightHawk volunteer pilot transported seven captive-born pups into the wild on two flights.

Later in the fall, we broke records again flying 12 adult wolves for captive breeding between seven facilities nationwide on two flights. Linda Moore, a member of the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan said, “I really challenged LightHawk when I came up with this complicated plan to move seven wolves with one round-trip flight. But of course LightHawk came through and delivered with the help of a very dedicated volunteer pilot! ...I can’t speak highly enough of the LightHawk team and the work they do!”

# VOLUNTEER PILOTS

Nadim Abuhaidar\*  
David Acker  
Kenneth Adelman  
Gabrielle Adelman  
Jim Afinowich  
Terry Alberta  
Stephen W Allsop  
Thomas AmRhein  
Eric Anderson  
John Anson  
Paul Armstrong  
Ralph Arwood  
James Averett\*  
John Baker  
Daniel Barley  
Courtney Barnhorst  
Michael Baum  
Greg Bedinger  
Robert Bender\*  
Milton Bennett  
Jon Berman  
Jay Beveridge  
Ernie Bitten  
Brent Blue  
John Bone  
Chris Bonter  
Zach Border  
Blair Bouchier  
Chris Boyer  
William Brine  
Norman Brod  
Jason Brooks  
Phil Brown  
Steven Brown  
Tom Bryant  
James Buck  
Eileen Burger  
Gregory Burnett\*  
Brandon Butsick\*  
Jim Cameron  
Anthony Carson  
Linda Chism\*  
John Chlopek  
Scott Cianchette\*  
Bob Cipolli\*  
Frederick Colby  
David Cole  
Peter Coltman  
David Comarow  
Wayne Connor

Denise Coreoran  
Robert Costello  
James Crawford  
Charles Crinnian  
Warren Dean\*  
Matthew Debski  
Edward DeCastro  
Mark Dedon  
Thomas Dillon  
Reg Dowdall  
Patrick Andrew  
Dunigan  
Rick Durden  
Joseph DuRousseau  
Jerry Edgerton  
Noam Eisen\*  
James Elegante  
C. Rudy Engholm\*  
Jon Engle  
Daniel Evans  
Jeffrey Fainer  
William Faulkner  
Barbara Filkins\*  
Richard Filson  
Kurt Fischer\*  
Joseph Fischetti  
Rich Fisher  
Dennis Fitzpatrick  
Eric Sandberg  
Fogelin  
Aaron Foster  
Kenneth Foster  
John French\*  
Jamie Gamble  
Mark Gaponoff  
Bette Gardner  
Steven Garman  
Peter Geiler  
Lee Gerstein  
Clifford Gill  
Bob Gill  
Martin Goldfarb  
Donald Goodman\*  
Reg Goodwin  
Peter Gordon  
Shane Gorman  
Lane Gormley\*  
Kelly Gottlieb  
Emil Gould  
James Grady\*

Eric Grant  
Ney Grant  
Richard Greenawald  
Howard Greenberg  
David Grimm  
Thomas Haas\*  
Hunter Handsfield\*  
Douglas Harford  
David Harnitchek  
Barry Harper\*  
David Harris  
Rusty Harrison\*  
John Hart  
Mike Hart  
Benjamin Harvey  
Hal Hayden  
Jeffrey Hazlett  
James David Heaney  
Richard Heller  
Randall Henderson\*  
Timothy Hendricks  
James Herring\*  
Charles Heywood  
Bruce Hinds  
Jeffrey Hinkle  
Jonathon Hinson\*  
Jerry Hoogerwerf  
Bruce Horn  
Susan Hostler  
David Houghton\*  
Jim Houser  
Joe Howley  
Scott Humphries  
Rick Hunt  
Arthur Hussey III  
Steve Isom  
Richard Jacobs  
Michael Jesch  
Dean Johnson  
Kirk Johnson  
Thomas Jordan  
John Kamburoff  
Sidney Karin  
Jerry Karlsberg  
Joe Keeton  
Chris Keithley  
Robert Keller\*  
Steve Kent\*  
Alan Kinback\*  
John King

Martha King  
Steve Kiss  
Jim Knowles  
Richard Koril\*  
Alice Kottmyer  
Jason Kozak\*  
David Krahn  
David Kunkel  
Nathan Kurth  
John Kusianovich  
Paul Kutler  
Hubert Lacey  
Fred Lagno  
Vincent Lalomia  
Jonathan Lampitt  
Robert Lange  
Michael Langston\*  
Timothy Lapage  
Andreas Lauschke  
Tom LeCompte  
John-Michael Lee  
Ray Lee  
Ted Leenerts  
Roy Lewallen\*  
Jeremy Lezin  
Todd Libke  
Gary Lickle  
Perry Lindsay  
Robert Lober  
Brian Locascio  
Jack Long\*  
Allen Low  
Larry Lowenkron  
Pavel Lukes  
Douglas Lumgair  
Ryan Lunde  
Matthew Machen  
Brian MacNamara  
Jeanne MacPherson  
John Mahany  
Mark Mantei  
Miguel Marin  
Dan Marks\*  
Allen Mathews  
James Matthews  
Carl Mattson  
Michael Maya  
Charles  
Michael McBride  
Wayne McClelland

Richard McCraw\*  
Bruce McLean  
Mike McNamara  
Kathrynne  
McPherson  
Richard McSpadden  
William Menzel  
Mark Merrill  
John Merritt  
Steve Meyer\*  
Wolfgang Meyn  
David Miller  
William Mims\*  
Anne Minder  
Doug Monger  
Tony Moradian  
David Morrison\*  
Fredric Moskol  
Wayne Munson  
Russell Munson  
David Murphy  
Gordon Murray  
Arlene Myers-Alexander\*  
Val Nasano\*  
Ken Newbury\*  
Janice Newman  
Bill Nicolai  
Jane Nicolai  
Peter Niewieroski  
Paul Novak  
Gerold Noyes  
Geoffrey R. Nye  
Paul O'Bagy  
David Osher  
Patrick Paap  
Robert Panebianco\*  
Alejandro Parra  
Gregory Paulin  
Larry Petro  
Steve Phillabaum  
Ben Pierce  
John Plaza  
Steven Poirot  
Geoff Pope  
Stephen Powell  
Mike Poznansky  
R Daniel Prentiss  
John Priscu\*  
William Psaledakis  
Sandy Quillen  
Bruce Ray  
Joe Reaves  
Tomer Regev  
Rex Reynolds

Ross Rice\*  
 Jim Richards  
 David Riffle  
 Patrick Riley  
 Kevin Roache  
 Stephen Robbins  
 Léon Robert  
 Lisa Robertson  
 Mark Robidoux  
 James Robinson  
 Nelson Ronsvalle\*  
 Chuck Rosenfeld\*  
 Jane Rosevelt\*  
 Eric Ross  
 Rob Ross  
 Polly Ross  
 Jim Roswell  
 Bill Rush\*  
 Scott Ryan  
 Nathan Rydman  
 John Sandvig  
 Wayne Sayer\*  
 Michael Schaffer  
 Charles Schildecker  
 Jim Schmidt\*  
 Michael Schroeder\*  
 Chuck Schroll  
 Susan Schwaab\*  
 Terry Scott  
 Michael Scott  
 Jerrold Seckler  
 Scott Sedam  
 Donna Shannon  
 David Shapiro\*  
 Ken Shapiro  
 Dan Silvers\*  
 Douglass Sisk\*  
 Lawrence Sittig\*  
 Skip Slyfield  
 Robert Smith  
 JP Soldo  
 Jochen Spengler  
 Frank Steeves  
 Jay Steffenhagen  
 Edward Steinman  
 Bob Stoecker  
 Eric Stoltz  
 Dick Stone  
 Joe Stringer  
 Colin Summers  
 Michael Sutton  
 Larry Swanson  
 Bill Tarmey  
 Timothy Taylor  
 Robert Thomas

Zachary Thomas  
 Dan Thompson  
 Art Thompson  
 McHenry Tichenor  
 Tom Tillman  
 Timothy Timmons  
 Timothy Toal  
 G.Val Tollefson  
 Wayland Toning  
 Kelly Trigg-Grossetete  
 Marijke Unger\*  
 Rick Utermohlen  
 Gilberto Velez-Domenech\*  
 Michael Venturino  
 Matt Verdieck  
 Greg Vernon\*  
 Varlin Vissepo  
 Herb Wagers  
 Philip Walker  
 Richard Walker  
 Charles Walling  
 Keith Ward  
 David Warner  
 Peter Watkins  
 Terri Watson  
 David Weeks\*  
 David Weissman  
 Peter Welles  
 Rich Wellner  
 Stephanie Wells\*  
 Randall Wells  
 Cory West  
 Michael White  
 Gerry Whitley  
 Judston Wickwire  
 Kent Wien  
 Rhon Williams  
 Steve Williams  
 Brian Williams  
 John Wilson  
 Brent Witters  
 Aron Wolf  
 Robert Woodley  
 Will Worthington\*  
 Alan Wright  
 Chuck Yanke\*  
 Scott Young  
 Andy Young  
 Mark Zaller

*\*Flew missions between  
 April 1, 2020 and March  
 31, 2021.*

## PILOT AWARDS



### Spirit of LightHawk Award

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

*Steve Meyer*



### Bill & Betty Rockwell Award

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

*Mike Schroeder*



### Rookie of the Year

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

*Jim Schmidt*



### Carpenter Award

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

*Will Worthington*



### President's Award

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.

*Wayne McClelland*

## PLATINUM PILOTS

### 15 years

Val Tollefson  
 David Murphy  
 Daniel Evans  
 Doug Monger

### 25 years

Jane Rosevelt  
 Reg Goodwin  
 Dick Walker

### 20 years

Tim La Page  
 Steven Garman  
 Ed Steinman

### 30 years

Milton Bennett

# FLOWN WEST



## Lawrence 'Bud' Sittig

Bud Sittig was a larger-than-life leader. He was, as Jim Becker recounted, "a pilot's pilot having the unusual distinction of having a distinguished career in military,

commercial and general aviation." Bud joined LightHawk in 2012, first as a volunteer pilot, then as a member of the Board of Directors in 2013. Bud flew 25 missions during his service to LightHawk and helped recruit new volunteer pilots. As Board Chair, Bud was at the forefront of recruiting new Directors and senior staff, engaging volunteer pilots and fundraising for LightHawk. His leadership is deeply missed."



## Steve Knaebel

Steve Knaebel was a former LightHawk volunteer pilot and board member. In addition to his formal roles at LightHawk, Steve was a supporter, coach, mentor and friend. He was also a

staunch advocate for environmental protection, especially in Latin America. Throughout his time at LightHawk, (which spanned decades) Steve's congenial personality, aviation expertise and valuable leadership touched many people and improved our organization. More than once, Steve swooped in to save the day for LightHawk. He is greatly missed.

Mark Roberts  
John Feagin  
Paul Mattson  
Key Dismukes

Gerry Whitley  
James Averett  
Bob Peterson



# DONOR SPOTLIGHT

## David and Gale Kunkel

When considering David and Gale Kunkel's impact on LightHawk, the headline for their inspirational story would read "Big Ideas, Big Smiles and Big Hearts." David contributes his expertise to LightHawk's sustainable future through Finance and Endowment Committees frequently challenging board members and staff to consider emerging opportunities and measures of success. He does this with the perspective of hundreds of flight hours as a Volunteer Pilot. In a year of Zoom calls, David and Gale accepted a proposal last December to sponsor match funding for The Climb Campaign. With big smiles, Gale and David gladly agreed and continually cheered staff on during the campaign generating more than \$50,000 in the final quarter. This sponsorship, above and beyond their annual giving, made a difference in a funding year substantially impacted by the pandemic. Whether the story is about hosting events or sharing their LightHawk story with prospective donors, their big hearts will always be the lead and we are always grateful for their support.

## Walton Family Foundation

For the Walton Family Foundation, having a robust vision is just as important as having strategies to get there. To help achieve their vision for a resilient Colorado River ecosystem, WFF has invested in LightHawk's team for multiple years. Our flight campaigns, designed and carried out in coordination with other WFF grantees, engage experts and decision makers who are working to keep the river and the human and wildlife communities that depend on it, healthy for generations to come. To get enough water in the right places at the right time to support the environment and human well-being is a monumental task and one that the Walton Family Foundation has invested in significantly.



# OUR DONORS

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## **\$50,000 and Above**

Appleby Foundation  
Cornell Douglas Foundation  
David and Gale Kunkel  
Thomas W. Haas Foundation  
Walton Family Foundation  
William Penn Foundation

## **\$10,000 - \$49,999**

The Batchelor Foundation, Inc.  
Benedict Family Foundation  
The Eucalyptus Foundation  
Jamie and Christine Gamble  
Marisla Foundation  
Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust  
RiverStyx Foundation  
Celia P. Taylor  
The Volgenau Foundation  
Josh and Becky Marvel and WELWE Foundation  
Wyncote Foundation Northwest

## **\$1,500 - \$9,999**

Jim Becker and Mimi Macksoud  
Blyler- Thompson Charitable Fund  
Ralph Britton  
Mr. and Mrs. Emmett  
Lucretia W. Evans  
Mark and Willow Follett  
ForeFlight  
The George F. Baker Trust  
Google, Inc.  
Jack and Carolyn Long  
Ray Lee and Sue Morgensen  
John Newell  
Michele and Howard Rutledge  
Wendy Shattil - Share the View Nature Photo Contest  
Lawrence and Fran Sittig  
Philip M. Walker and Cheryl A. Tritt  
Tracey Weisberg  
The Wildlife Forever Fund

## **\$500 - \$1,499**

Nadim and Maggie Abuhaidar  
Agricultural Stewardship Association  
James Andrews  
Ralph Arwood  
Greg Bedinger and Jan Mulder  
Reinier and Nancy Beeuwkes  
The Benevity Community Impact Fund

Bruce Berger  
Matthew Berman  
Ryan Boggs  
Geoffrey and Martha Clark  
Kitty Collins  
Columbia Land Conservancy  
Robert and Susan Crenshaw  
Deborah and William Roach Trust  
Delaware River Basin Commission  
Rudy and Grace Engholm  
Fanwood Foundation West  
William and Gail Faulkner  
Hamill Family Foundation  
Christina Heinle  
Karen Holmgren  
John and Elaine French Family Foundation  
Robert and Carol Keller via Keller Family Fund, a donor advised fund of the Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties  
Ronald Labrecque  
Jeannine Leeper  
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Amy Woodworth

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Robert McKernan  
Peter and Carlene Mennen  
Mesker Park Zoo and Botanic Garden  
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Jochen Spengler and Elena De Angelis  
Patricia C. Stein  
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Stephen Williams

## **\$1 - \$249**

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Martin and Peggy Albert  
Kerry Albright  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
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Laurie Archer  
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Del and Linda Coolidge  
Sharky Cornell  
Seth Cothrun  
Laura Cotts  
Harold Craven  
Diane Davidson  
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Foundation  
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Walter Gammill  
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Peter and Joanne Griesinger  
Robert and Sharon Handelsman  
Margaret and Thomas Hartman  
Richard A. Horvitz  
Phillip Huwiler  
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Glenn C. Muhr  
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David and Terri Pagni  
Stephen and Susann Paige  
Lavonne Painter  
Pershing - A BNY Mellon Company  
Wayne Persons  
Anita Peterson  
Ann Peterson  
Kathy Peterson  
Michael Phillips  
Chris Poehlmann  
Curtis Pricer  
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Bryan L. Wyberg  
Claire Zugmeyer  
Winston Wheeler

LightHawk also received several anonymous gifts. We appreciate donors' generosity and respect their request for privacy.

*This list represents gifts received April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.*

# 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  
Beverly Steveson  
Terri Watsom and Kimi Harrison  
Brian Williams

*For information and assistance on planned giving, please contact our Chief Advancement Officer at 970-797-9355, ext. 12.*

## GIVING IN MEMORY OF

Kerry Albright in memory of Jim Roush  
James Andrews in memory of Richard Milne and James Andrews Sr.  
Finina Aranez in memory of Key Dismukes  
Greg Bedinger and Jan Mulder in memory of Robert E. Leeper  
Greg Bedinger and Jan Mulder in memory of Bob Peterson  
Laura Belcher in memory of Robert Ardisana  
Kate and Don Breski in memory of Bob Ardisana  
Mary Breski in memory of Bob Ardisana  
Harold Craven in memory of Key Dismukes  
Kate and Kirk Gammill in memory of Bob Peterson  
Walter Gammill in memory of Robert L. Peterson  
Kathy Gaudet in memory of R. Key Dismukes  
Janice Goldberg in memory of Bob Ardisana  
Walter and Lisa Hanley in memory of Robert Ardisana  
Margaret and Thomas Hartman in memory of Robert Peterson  
Ann Iglesias in memory of Bob Ardisana  
Patricia Jones in memory of Key Dismukes

Jeannine Leeper in memory of Robert Leeper  
Linda Lux in memory of F. Thomas Ledig  
Josh and Becky Marvil in memory of Steve Knaebel  
Ashley McLaughlin in memory of Robert Ardisana  
Diana Murray in memory of Robert Ardisana  
John Newell in memory of Edwina K. Nesbitt Newell  
Jane and Bill Nicolai in memory of Steve Knaebel  
Ann O'Connor in memory of Key Dismukes  
Kathy Peterson in memory of Bob Peterson  
Ann Peterson in memory of Bob Peterson  
Curtis Pricer in memory of Robert Key Dismukes  
Emilie Ryan and Clayton Fraser in memory of Steve Knaebel  
Brian Schirmer in memory of Robert Ardisana  
Bud and Fran Sittig in memory of Steve Knaebel  
Bud and Fran Sittig in memory of Steve Paul  
Dawn Sleva in memory of Robert Ardisana  
Sue Watson in memory of Andrew Borg  
Anonymous in memory of Jim Roush  
Sarah Werner in memory of Jim Roush  
Beverly Williams in memory of Bob Peterson

## GIVING IN HONOR OF

Thomas and Anita Adams in honor of Jack Long  
Greg Bedinger and Jan Mulder in honor of Christine Steele  
Ryan Boggs in honor of David Kunkel  
Ann Brennan in honor of Nik Brennan  
Rudy and Grace Engholm in honor of Terri Watson & Emilie Ryan  
John and Paula Foy in honor of C. Rudy Engholm  
Phillip Huwiler in honor of Nana Obayashi.

David and Gale Kunkel in honor of Emilie Ryan  
Chris Poehlmann in honor of Sonoma County CA environmental activist Jay Halcomb  
Emilie Ryan and Clayton Fraser in honor of David and Gale Kunkel

Jenna Whitehill in honor of Douglas Egelston  
Amy Woodworth in honor of David Kunkel

# LightHawk Partners

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7 Lakes Alliance

Agricultural Stewardship Association

Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative

American Rivers

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Berks Nature

Bodega Marine Laboratory

Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Calusa Waterkeeper

Chelan-Douglas Land Trust

Chicago Zoological Society

Collier County Pollution Control

Colorado West Land Trust

Columbia Land Conservancy

Conservancy of Southwest Florida

Conservation Law Foundation

Delaware Currents

Delaware Highlands Conservancy

Delaware River Basin Commission

Dickerson Park Zoo

Endangered Wolf Center

Food & Water Watch

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center

FracTracker Alliance

French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust

Friends of Ironwood Forest

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

Friends of the Upper Delaware River

George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center

Hudson Highlands Land Trust

Idaho Conservation League

International Crane Foundation

International Dark Sky Association

Jackson Hole Land Trust

Jefferson Land Trust

Long Live The Kings

Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Maryland Environmental Trust

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan

Mississippi River Network

Mono Lake Committee

Musconetcong Watershed Association

National Marine Sanctuaries

Natural Resources Council of Maine

Nature Trust of New Brunswick

Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife

New Mexico Friends of the River Otter

New Mexico Game & Fish

New Mexico PBS

Northeast Wilderness Trust

NYenvironcom

Open Space Institute

Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition

Oregon State University

Pinnacles National Park

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium

Ricketts Conservation Foundation

Rig to Flip

Roger Williams Park Zoo

San Francisco Baykeeper

Santa Barbara Zoo

Save the Scenic Santa Ritas

Sedgwick County Zoo

Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility

Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter

Sky Island Alliance

Snake River Waterkeeper

Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center

National Parks Conservation Association

Sunriver Nature Center

Surfrider Foundation

Teton Raptor Center

The Bay Foundation

The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed

The Guardian

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey

The Nature Conservancy - New Hampshire

The Nature Conservancy - Maine

The Nature Conservancy - Arizona

The Peregrine Fund

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust

University of Colorado-Center for Environmental Journalism

University Of Minnesota

Upper Valley Land Trust

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Washington Farmland Trust

Watershed Coalition of the Lehigh Valley

Western Colorado Alliance for Community Action

Western Resource Advocates

Western Rivers Conservancy

Wildlife Science Center

Wolf Conservation Center

# OUR FINANCIALS

LightHawk is entirely funded by the generous gifts of donors, foundations and partners. Their commitment to investment in the organization allows us to achieve significant conservation results. The relationships LightHawk has built with those who provide the financial support to keep the mission going have, in many cases, been built over more than 10 years. That continual

support means LightHawk can count on a regular income stream, enabling us to address ongoing conservation challenges as well as emerging, urgent issues. LightHawk is dedicated to being responsible stewards of the gifts we receive. Every dollar spent reflects our commitment to transforming money received into conservation wins.

<i>Statement of Activities for the year ending on March 31, 2021</i>	
Contributed & Granted Revenue	\$ 933,909
Donated Services & Materials	\$ 743,651
Net Investment (loss) income	\$ 314,337
Other Revenue	\$ 1,391
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,993,288</b>
Program Services	\$ 1,497,711
Fundraising and donor communications	\$ 133,473
General and Administrative Services	\$ 96,512
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,727,696</b>
Change in Net Assets	\$ 265,592
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 2,586,745
Net assets, end of year	\$ 2,852,337
<i>Statement of Financial Position for the year ending on March 31, 2021</i>	
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 888,525
Unconditional promises to give, current	\$ 286,000
Unconditional promises to give, net of current portion	\$ 700,000
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 51,093
Property and Equipment	\$ 347
Endowment Investments	\$ 1,127,487
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 3,053,452</b>
<i>Net Assets, without donor restrictions</i>	<i>\$ 735,576</i>
<i>Net Assets, with donor restrictions</i>	<i>\$ 2,116,761</i>
<i>Total Current Liabilities</i>	<i>\$ 201,115</i>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 3,053,452</b>

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jim Becker**, Chair, Bolton, Mass.

**Kimberly Eckert**, Vice Chair, Denver, Colo.

**Norissa Giangola**, Washington, D.C.

**David Kunkel**, Treasurer, Boulder, Colo.

**Steve Kent**, Warwick, N.Y.

**Josh Marvil**, Secretary, Yarmouth, Maine

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**Phil Walker**, Bethesda, Md.

**Will Worthington**, Carefree, Ariz.

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**Stephanie Wells**, Arvada, Colo.

**Brian Williams**, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



## OUR MISSION

LightHawk accelerates conservation success through the powerful perspective of flight. LightHawk works to accelerate the pace of conservation across the U.S., Mexico and Canada. We choose to work in places where our unique perspective can make the greatest impact.

## OUR STAFF

### **Chelsea Baird**

Development and Administrative Associate

### **Ryan Boggs**

Chief Program Officer

### **Clint Burson**

Strategic Communications Manager

### **Esther Duke**

Western Program Director

### **Audrey Ek-Psomas**

Eastern Program Coordinator

### **Cynthia Hartmann**

Chief Financial Officer

### **Suzanne Langley**

Chief Advancement Officer

### **Jonathan Milne**

Eastern Program Director

### **Lee Pagni**

Foundation Relations Manager

### **Michele Rutledge**

Chief Executive Officer

### **Christine Steele**

Western Program Coordinator

## PHOTO CREDITS

Page 2-3: Ralph Arwood/LightHawk

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Page 7 inset photos: Jonathan Milne/LightHawk, Santa Barbara Zoo, Richard McCraw/LightHawk, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Page 10-11: Ralph Lee Hopkins

Page 12: Scott Kranz

Page 19: Jerry Clark/LightHawk

Page 20: Alyssa Scott/LightHawk

# LIFT OUR WINGS



As the end of the year approaches, we can look back on what has been a turbulent year for almost everyone. In the midst of uncertainty and challenges to how we work, your support meant more than ever this past year. LightHawk is 100% donor-funded and without the generosity of our supporters, our work would have to be scaled back, negatively impacting our partners.

This year, we have seen the state of our climate reach a critical point. LightHawk's work conducting flights for partners and change-makers has never been more important than it is today.

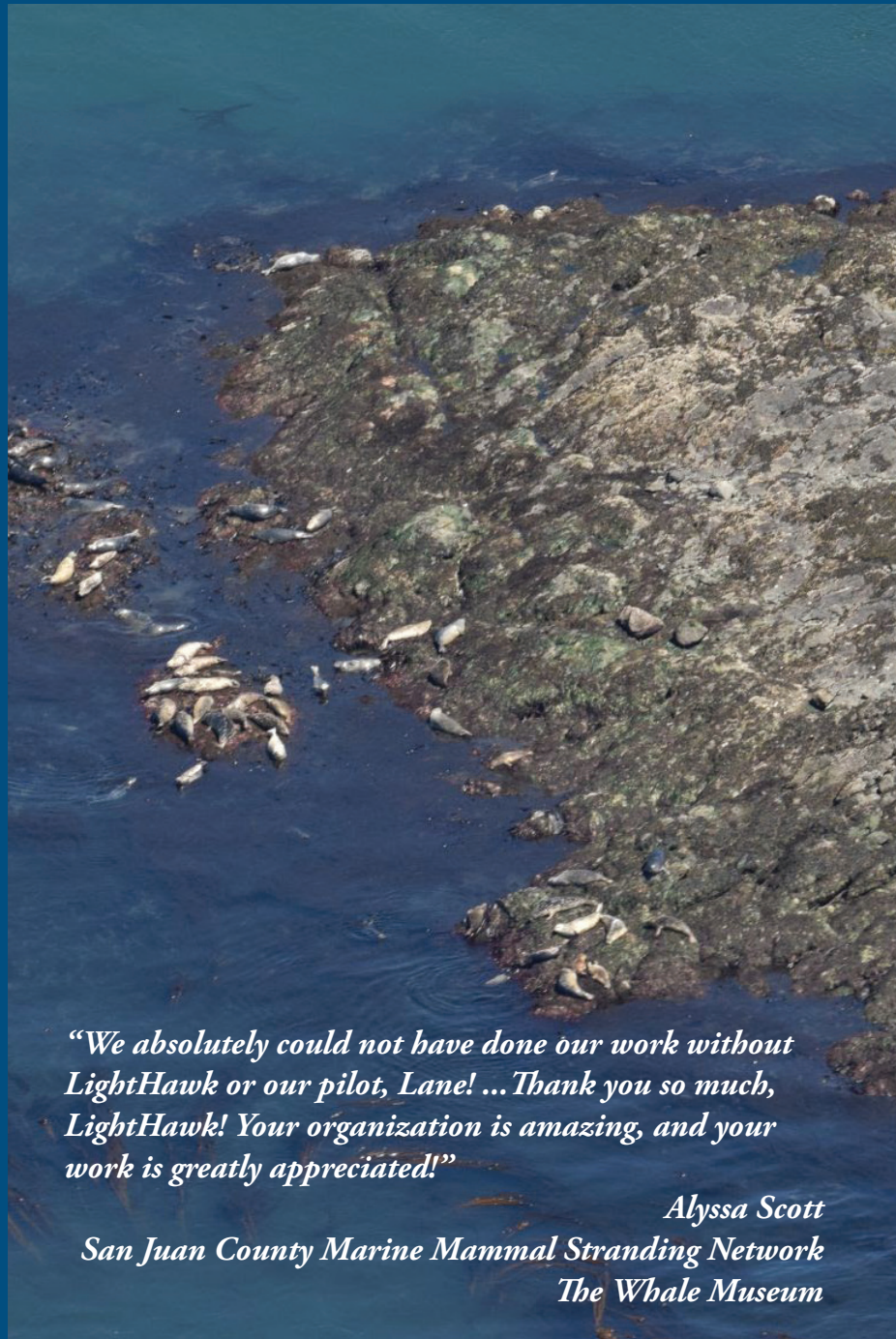
Your gift will support our ability to plan flights with partners, help us attract new volunteer pilots and enable us to make a difference in important conservation efforts. Contributions to LightHawk ensure that partners and change-makers continue to access an aerial perspective, giving them the ability to see the big picture of conservation projects and make the best decisions for the future of our planet.

If you would like to support LightHawk before the end of the year, use the envelope included with your copy of this annual report or visit LightHawk's online donation page at <https://bit.ly/2021LHAnnualReport>.



Get In Touch With LightHawk  
Mail: PO Box 913239, Denver, CO 80291  
[info@lighthawk.org](mailto:info@lighthawk.org) | [www.lighthawk.org](http://www.lighthawk.org)  
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*"We absolutely could not have done our work without LightHawk or our pilot, Lane! ... Thank you so much, LightHawk! Your organization is amazing, and your work is greatly appreciated!"*

*Alyssa Scott  
San Juan County Marine Mammal Stranding Network  
The Whale Museum*