



The Mountain Pact

Year End Highlights



Happy New Year! In 2019, The Mountain Pact continued our work elevating the voices of western mountain communities on federal policies related to public lands, climate, wildfire, outdoor recreation, and other conservation issues. It is a historical time in American politics as we continue to [see attacks](#) on the values we hold dear.

We thank you for your passion, dedication, and continued support of [The Mountain Pact](#). Your partnerships make this work possible. What a year 2019 has been and we are excited to share with you some of what made this year special.

[2020 Planning Survey](#)

If you haven't already, please take a moment to fill out our [2020 planning survey](#). We value what you have to say and want to ensure we incorporate your priorities and feedback into our 2020 activities!

4th Annual Expedition to Washington, D.C.



Western mountain voices speak at the Nation's Capital

The Mountain Pact, along with five local elected officials, went to [Washington, D.C.](#) for our fourth annual trip to meet with Western Senators and Representatives to [discuss](#) concerns around the Trump administration's ethics violations, lack of transparency, and environmental rollbacks. We also pushed for full and permanent funding for the Land

and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Mayor [Sarah Smith Hymes](#) of Avon, Colorado; Mayor Pro Tem [Hunter Mortensen](#) of Frisco, Colorado; Mayor Pro Tem [Ward Hauenstein](#) of Aspen, Colorado; and Councilmembers [Sonja Macys](#) of Steamboats Springs, Colorado; and [Devin Middlebrook](#) of South Lake Tahoe, California made the trek with Executive Director, Anna Peterson.

- The trip and advocacy were covered in: [South Lake Tahoe Now](#); [Tahoe Mountain News](#); [La Junta Tribune-Democrat](#); [The Pueblo Chieftain](#); [Aspen Daily News](#).

Campaign Work

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Fully funding and permanently authorizing the LWCF is critical to the continuation of one of our nation's most successful public land and water conservation programs



- On February 4, The Mountain Pact [urged the U.S. Senate to take bipartisan action and permanently reauthorize](#) the LWCF as part of a public lands package.
 - *This effort was covered by [SNEWS](#) and [The Durango Telegraph](#).*
- On February 12, The Senate, with bipartisan support, passed a public lands package that included [LWCF reauthorization](#) after four months of the program being in limbo.
 - *The Mountain Pact's statement was covered by [SNEWS](#).*
- On March 12, The President signed the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act into law. Read the Mountain Pact's [statement](#) on the reauthorization of LWCF and the Administration's elimination of LWCF funding in the budget.
 - *This was covered by [SNEWS](#), [The Summit Daily](#), [Whitefish Pilot](#), [Sky-Hi Daily](#), and the [Vail Daily](#).*
- On March 27, Summit County, Utah Commissioners penned an [opinion-editorial](#) in the Park Record urging Congress to permanently fund the LWCF.
- In April, Routt County, Colorado Commissioners signed a letter supporting funding for the LWCF.
 - *This was covered by the [Steamboat Pilot and Today](#).*



- On May 22, Secretary of the Interior, David Bernhardt responded to inquiries by the Senate Appropriations Committee on the Administration's Fiscal Year 2020 Budget and [lack of funding for the LWCF](#) as well as environmental and wildlife protections.
 - *The Mountain Pact's statement was covered by [SNEWS](#).*
- On June 11, **151 local elected officials from all 11 Western states, and 46 communities (our largest sign-on letter yet!)** [sent a letter](#) to Congress asking them to fully fund the LWCF. This included 19 full city councils and county commissions.
 - *The Mountain Pact covered this in a [Media Release](#) which was covered by [The Summit Daily Times](#), [The Missoula Current](#), and via two [stories](#) in the [Sierra Sun](#).*
- **13 Communities sent individual town letters** to their Congressional Delegation:
 - **California:** Town of Truckee
 - **Colorado:** Eagle County, Pitkin County, Routt County, Town of Carbondale, Town of Crested Butte, Town of Estes Park, City of Glenwood Springs, Town of Ophir, Town of Ridgway, Town of Winter Park
 - **Montana:** City of Whitefish
 - **New Mexico:** Town of Taos
- Breckenridge, Colorado Mayor Eric Mamula wrote a guest opinion piece for the [Summit Daily](#) on how public lands and LWCF are the foundation of the outdoor recreation industry.
- The Mountain Pact Executive Director, Anna Peterson, had an opinion editorial run in the [Colorado Sun](#) and the [Montrose Daily](#) in August calling on Congress to include full, permanent, mandatory

funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

- In August, Sonja Macy's, a Steamboat Springs, Colorado council member wrote a [Letter to the Editor in the Steamboat Pilot](#) detailing why the LWCF needs to be fully funded.
- On December 10, **five mayors from the western mountain communities of Driggs, Idaho; Moab, Utah; Glenwood Springs, Avon, and Ophir, Colorado spoke on a press call** about the urgent need for Congress to pass full LWCF funding.
 - *Read about it in [E&E News](#), [The Post Register](#), [The Moab Times](#), [Teton Valley News](#) and [KUER](#).*

- On December 19, [Congress passed](#) a bipartisan spending bill that included \$495 million for the LWCF. We are disappointed in the less than full funding but thanks to your help, America's best conservation program is closer than ever to receiving full, permanent funding. **Six Mountain Pact community mayors, mayors pro tem, and county commissioners released statements on the LWCF funding level in the budget appropriations bill** it was covered by [Colorado Politics](#).



Department of Interior (DOI) Public Lands Management

The Trump Administration's ruthless focus on expanding oil, gas, and mineral extraction on public lands puts conservation, outdoor recreation, and mountain town economies at risk

- Read [The Mountain Pact's Media Statement](#) on impacts to our public lands due to the Government shutdown and concerns about acting Secretary of the Interior Bernhardt.
- On January 5, Town of Mammoth Lakes council member John Wentworth [spoke to NPR](#) about how the government shutdown impacted their community and others like it.
 - On January 27, Avon, Colorado Mayor Sarah Smith Hymes wrote an opinion editorial for the [Colorado Sun](#) detailing why **we need a comprehensive federal rule that applies to all oil and gas development on public lands in order to minimize waste and reduce methane emissions.**
- On February 4, The Mountain Pact released a statement detailing why we were deeply troubled by the [nomination of David Bernhardt](#) to be Interior Secretary.
 - *The story was covered by the [Missoula Current](#), [Denver Post](#), and [SNEWS](#).*
- On March 16, Frisco, Colorado Mayor Pro Tem Hunter Mortensen wrote [an opinion editorial](#) detailing grave concerns over **Acting Secretary of Interior David Bernhardt becoming the official Secretary of the DOI.**
- On March 28, Corinne Platt, Mayor of [Ophir, Colorado responded](#) to Acting Secretary of Interior David Bernhardt's Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Confirmation Hearing.
 - *She had an opinion editorial printed in the [Colorado Sun](#) on March 31.*
- On April 11, The Mountain Pact [released a statement](#) detailing why we are deeply dismayed by the Senate's confirmation of David Bernhardt as Secretary of Interior.
 - *This was covered in the [Grand Junction Daily Sentinel](#).*
- On September 5, The Mountain Pact released a new report:

"Public Lands Conservation in the Trump Era: How the Trump Administration's Policies are Hurting Western Mountain Communities."

- This was announced in a [media release](#) and covered by [Indian Country Today](#) and [SNEWS](#).
- Secretary Bernhardt reappointed William Pendley as Acting Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director whose appointment was set to expire on September 30. The reappointment terminates on January 3, 2020.
 - *The Mountain Pact covered this with a [media release](#) that was covered by [Indian Country Today](#).*



Miscellaneous Campaign Updates

Through the years, The Mountain Pact has worked various public lands, climate change, and conservation campaigns. We strive to keep you up to date on active as well as inactive campaigns

- At the end of April 2019, the **Royalty Policy Committee was disbanded**. The industry stacked committee had been steeped in controversy for its entire tenure under the Trump administration.
 - *Mayor Pro Tem of Frisco, Colorado wrote an [op-ed about the RPC](#) in 2018 that was then covered by [Denver 7 News](#).*
- [Also in April](#), a federal court repealed the Trump administration's 2017 attempt to repeal an Obama era federal oil and coal valuation rule for public lands leasing.
- In October, we launched a new style of monthly conservation updates to include a broader range of conservation, public lands, and climate news-**stay tuned for the next update in January and read past issues [here](#)**.



The Mountain Pact Community Highlights

This year, we started the [Community Highlight Program](#) highlighting community leaders in [Estes Park, CO](#); [Aspen, CO](#); [Missoula, MT](#); and [Telluride, CO](#). Because most of the work we do takes place in one-on-one settings, we started this program to continue to build a network of active local elected officials who are connected to each other while learning about other Mountain Pact communities. **If you or someone on your town, city, or county council would like to be featured, please let us know at info@themountainpact.org!**

THANK YOU!

In addition to the campaign work listed above, continued pressure and critiques of the Trump administration's public lands management policies **have helped bring attention to the issues of methane leaks on public lands, uranium mining near the Grand Canyon, and the BLM's ill-thought-out move to Grand Junction, CO**. We look forward to continuing to work with our Mountain Pact network on these and many other campaigns in 2020!

For over five years, our work has been made possible by the generosity of people like you. Thanks to your support we've had another incredible year. **[This holiday season please consider contributing to The Mountain Pact to support the work we do](#)**. Your generosity will help us continue to partner with local elected officials in over 50 mountain communities from all

11 western states to build resilience in the face of environmental stresses and their economic impacts through a shared voice on policies related to climate, public lands, and outdoor recreation.



The Mountain Pact network of involved communities

Photo Credit: Anna Peterson, Jocelyn Leroux, Sierra Business Council

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