



## PRESS RELEASE

# Greater Challenges, Fewer Resources: The Future of Conservation in Greater Yellowstone

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According to the findings of a recent survey, there is a growing awareness among greater Yellowstone conservation leaders that the number, nature, and magnitude of the challenges and opportunities facing the region are outstripping the resources available to address them. The specific impacts to organizations include lower budgets, reduced staff, reduced wages and benefits for staff, and reduced levels of activity.

In early 2009, approximately 200 individuals working for conservation organizations in the region were surveyed by the Greater Yellowstone Conservation Organization Inventory (GYCOI) about their perspectives on conservation work in the region and view of the future.

Jason Wilmot, Executive Director of the Northern Rockies Conservation Cooperative said, "Our survey showed there are two significant, yet opposing, trends relevant to future conservation efforts in Greater Yellowstone. First, conservation challenges are wide-ranging and can be complex. Second, resources available to conservation organizations are drying up. Collectively, our capacity to address conservation issues will become much more difficult in the future. Conservation challenges are not going away, but the funding to address these challenges is."

Jonathan Schechter, Executive Director of the Charture Institute said, "We are entering an era where we simply cannot do more of the same. Conservation leaders have little control over the broader economic situation, but they do have control over identifying new ways to do more and differently with less."

The report findings showed that there is wide divergence of opinion in the conservation community regarding what constitutes a conservation success or failure, even on the same issue. Establishing a region-wide understanding of conservation effectiveness is difficult given how individual organizations have different priorities and measures of effectiveness.

Jonathan Schechter commented, "Simply finding more funding for established patterns of efficiency and capacity may be problematic. Conservationists have a choice to make. The first option is for organizations to find more resources to do things the same way. Alternatively, conservation outcomes can be pursued much more efficiently and effectively by shifting how we operate, who we partner with, and what we think we can accomplish well—basically, we can be more attentive to how our individual efforts fit into a broader context."

Wilmot added, "Conservationists can think about a context broader than just our individual organizational interests. We have an opportunity to build success by finding consensus on regional conservation goals, and better aligning our individual pursuits with these over-arching goals."

The Greater Yellowstone Conservation Directory and a full report of the survey results will be available online at [www.gycoi.org](http://www.gycoi.org)

**The Greater Yellowstone Conservation Organization Inventory is a project of  
the Northern Rockies Conservation Cooperative and the Charture Institute**