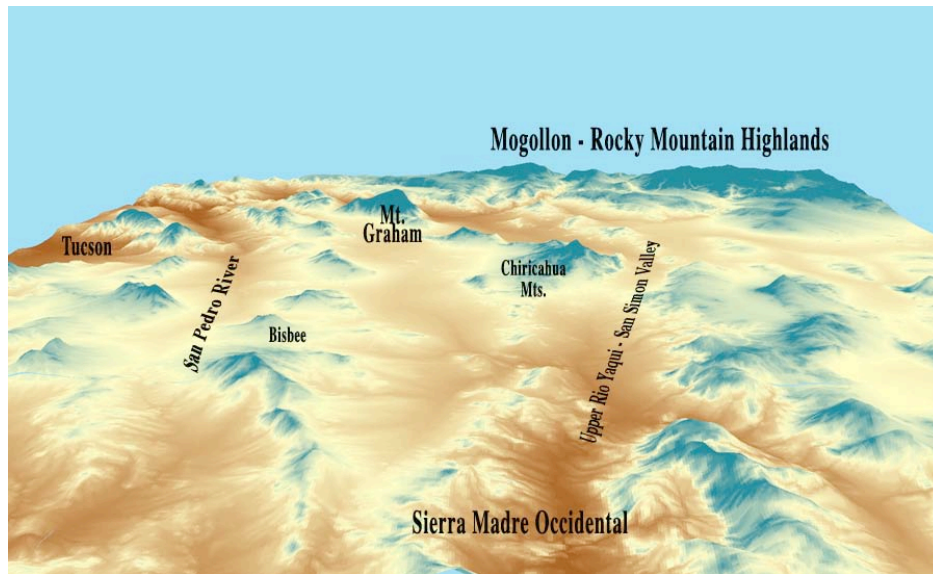




Conserving the Sky Islands: A Bridge for Biodiversity

Sky Island Alliance

www.SkyIslandAlliance.org



Globally Important Biodiversity Hotspot

- ✎ The National Forests and BLM lands of the Sky Island region are globally important because of their rich diversity of species and habitats. They contain:
 - ✎ Half the bird species of North America
 - ✎ 29 bat species
 - ✎ Over 3,000 species of plants and
 - ✎ 104 species of mammals.
 - ✎ Coronado National Forest has more endangered species than any other National Forest in the United States.
 - ✎ Threatened by poor livestock grazing practices, fire suppression, and recreation- and resource-based public lands management.

Regionally Threatened

- ✎ Conservation International has named North America's Madrean Pine-Oak Woodlands as one of the world's Biodiversity Hotspots most in need of stewardship and conservation. The 70,000 square miles of Sky Islands of SE Arizona and SW New Mexico are the northernmost portion of this Hotspot, and Conservation International recognized Sky Island Alliance as one of the primary groups organizing conservation in this region.
- ✎ As the main pine-oak forests of the Sierra Madre are logged and its grasslands overused at an astonishing rate, it becomes even more critical to ensure that the Sky Islands—the last refugium for jaguars, Mexican gray wolves, Apache goshawks, and many native fish, butterflies, and plants—remain protected. The Sky Islands are the only bridge for species between the Mexican tropics and the temperate central plateaus. *[note:replace photo w/better one-place only]*



Once-in-a -Lifetime Opportunity

- 🌳 The majority of our Sky Islands are under management of Coronado National Forest, with several vital wildlife corridors under management of the Bureau of Land Management (important mammals such as wolves and big cats move between Sky Islands through grasslands and deserts). Each of these agencies manages their lands based on overarching Management Plans, which are decades old and woefully lacking in modern conservation management prescriptives.
- 🌳 This year, Coronado National Forest and the BLM will begin creating new management plans—which, when completed, will guide forest and grassland management **for the next 20 years or more**. This is our chance to work *proactively* rather than *reactively*—and save hundreds of thousands of dollars down the road because we will be less likely to have to fight poor management.

We must act at the grassroots level in order to counteract the status quo and create a new paradigm for conservation planning in the MOST IMPORTANT LANDSCAPE BRIDGE in North America.

- 🌳 Sky Island Alliance's ***Conserving the Sky Islands: A Bridge for Biodiversity*** will positively affect these planning processes for 12 million acres by creating a grassroots coalition that will work proactively with the Forest Service and BLM in a series of open forums and planning meetings, followed by a public campaign to rally broad support for the cooperative planning process.
- 🌳 Sky Island Alliance already provides these federal agencies with much of the on-the-ground baseline information that will be used in creating these plans, including more accurate maps of roads, road conditions, roadless area boundaries, and wildlife corridors than the agencies themselves have been able to produce. We also assist these agencies with questions about roads, trails, campgrounds, riparian fauna, and large carnivore populations on the lands they manage, and with communicating with surrounding landowners. ***We are well-poised to lead the grassroots portion of planning processes in a proactive manner.***
- 🌳 Our fundraising efforts to date for this project prove that there is already tremendous grassroots support for planning now and fighting less later: since we mailed our members a December 2004 appeal letter, they have donated more than \$27,000.

Together with our partners—citizens, scientists, policy makers, and land management agencies—we will create the best plans for the future of our Sky Islands—

The bridge for North American biodiversity.

