

A Conversation with Julie and Bart Koehler



On September 16, 2010 Lorelei Costa interviewed two of Alaska's long-time, stalwart conservationists, Bart and Julie Koehler, to hear their stories about the Tongass Timber Reform Act, murrelet field research, what inspires them, and much more. Here is the transcript from their talk.

Lorelei: Thank you for being willing to tell your stories for our newsletter. I figured you'd be a bit embarrassed by the request, but I thought maybe you'd do it anyway.

Julie: Yes, definitely embarrassed!

Lorelei: So, let's start. When did you move to Alaska, and what brought you here?

Julie: I moved to Anchorage on December 23, 1979. I flew in by jet around 3 pm. The sky and mountains were in a wonderful, beautiful pink and blue alpine glow, and I thought, "Wow, I am in heaven. This is terrific."

I'd been wanting to move to Alaska since my college years. The wildlife, wilderness, and adventure are what brought me here.

The next winter I started learning how to cross-country ski. It was magical to ski at night in the sparkling snow under the stars.

Lorelei: Bart, how about you?

Bart: I'm trying to think if you want to hear about the first time I came to Alaska or the time I actually stayed. I think I'll talk about the time I stayed, because the other one gets into too long a story... hitchhiking across the country, and getting stuck in Ketchikan, and running out of money and all that.

I showed up for good about 10 years later. It was May of 1984, a gloriously sunny day, which I found out later was unusual.

Lorelei: Where was this? Juneau?

Bart: Yes, Juneau. I came to Juneau in May of 1984 to interview for the Executive Director position at the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. Then I was hired. The next day I was out with a friend in a skiff outside of Juneau in Auke Bay. I looked around at all the mountains surrounding us on this stunning, sunny day and thought, "Holy jeez, I'm in charge of trying to protect all this?" It was pretty exciting.

And then the rain came. And then I bought my first pair of rubber boots.

Lorelei: Tell me about one of the more memorable adventures you've had in Alaska.

Julie: For me, it was my very first glacier skiing trip, which was the Eklutna Glacier Hut-to-Hut Traverse, with 10 other adventurous souls. My pack was so heavy that I could hardly lift my legs. My pack was filled with 10 days' worth of food, supplies, ski and rescue gear, and clothes for cold weather.

I thought I was in shape as I'd spent two months carrying around 50 pounds of kitty litter to get in shape. But I think my pack weighed more than that. Halfway through the trip I had blisters on both of my heels the size of a 50-cent piece, through every layer of skin. The scars from those blisters were visible for probably five years.

I had done some training to learn to rappel and self-rescue, but in reality if I had fallen into a crevasse with such a heavy pack, it would've been over. I realized this halfway through the trip, and after that I cried every day thinking I was going to die, even though it was gloriously beautiful on the glacier.

When we finally got down to Crow Pass, we had to descend what I now know was a small headwall, but at that time that headwall seemed huge and terrifying to me. I could see my first grass in 10 days, and then I cried for fear I would die up on the ice before I got to touch that grass.

A couple of years later I went on to ski the Ruth Glacier and had the most fantastic time of my life. So, Eklutna, while my most memorable misadventure, was good practice.

Lorelei: Bart, what about you?

Bart: Well, it's hard to actually pick. We've had lots of memorable adventures out here in Southeast Alaska. Many of them have to do with whales. Many times we've been kayaking when whales would come up so close, and turn just before getting to the boat and look you right in the eye. It's hard to describe the magic of that, the mystery and mystical quality of it all.

We used to go out in a double kayak all the time (now we have two singles). I'd be in the stern, and Julie would always complain to me that when we came close to a humpback whale or a sleeping whale or several whales out there, I'd never let her get close enough. But one time in Glacier Bay in 2002, a whale came up right behind us in our double, and then alongside us, and then it gracefully dove beneath us without touching us whatsoever. Its partner turned in the water and looked us in the eye and then went straight down. That was the first time and only time that Julie has told me, "Back up! Back up! Back up!"

Lorelei: Have you ever heard of whales upsetting a boat? Does that ever happen?

Bart: We've heard of it happening by accident, when a whale was surprised, chased, or caught sleeping. When you're in a kayak, it's wise to tap the side of the boat to make noise so they know you're there.

Julie: Can I change my most memorable adventure? Bart is right. It's about whales. While working for Matt Kirchoff in Port Snettisham, which is about 50 miles south of Juneau, I went kayaking on my day off. As I was paddling along the shore—it was a real steep shore—I thought I saw something black under the surface of the water up ahead. Then it disappeared, and I wasn't sure if it was my imagination or not, so I stopped to watch it. I probably watched about three minutes and didn't see it again, so I thought it was my imagination.

I resumed paddling, and then, all of a sudden, a whale blows literally three feet away, right behind me. It turns out that it had been sleeping, and I had paddled right over it directly, so that when he blew, I was right on top of his rostrum.

When the whale blew, I jumped so hard that if I hadn't had on my spray skirt, I would have catapulted myself right out of the kayak! But I hit the straps of my spray skirt, which slammed me back down into the kayak. I frantically paddled as fast as I could, real shallow so I wouldn't hit the whale's head, thinking, "Uh oh, uh oh, uh oh, I'm going over."

But the whale stopped its ascent to the surface and instead went down real gently, did a 90 degree turn right in place underwater, and swam away so gently that his tail didn't even ruffle the water surface. He kindly let me off from my big mistake, and I telepathically thanked him profusely. So if whales can avoid you, they do, even when you are dumb enough to paddle right over them.

Bart: Other memorable adventures revolve around Southeast Alaska's big brown bears. When we've gone hiking up the Lisianski River or the Kadashan River, there is always the feeling that you are not in charge, that the bears own the place. At every turn you're looking for a brown bear up ahead of you, because the underbrush is so thick and the devil's club is so rough and tough and high and gnarly, and you realize that you're only there by their grace...

Julie: And they were actually just letting you go by...

Bart: It's a pretty humbling experience.

Lorelei: There's a theme so far in this conversation: the feeling of wonder for Alaska's wild areas and wildlife and beauty.

Julie: Yes, positively.

Lorelei: Julie, tell me about your tenure as president of Anchorage Audubon. How did you get involved, and what did you try to accomplish as president?

Julie: When I arrived in Alaska I didn't even really know what an environmentalist was. I was working as a veterinary technician, and on my way into work one day, I saw some people throw their empty McDonald's bags out their car window. I was outraged that someone would mindlessly litter Alaska like that. Once I got to work, I was complaining about the incident when a young co-worker turned to me and said, "Oh my god, are you one of those god-damned environmentalists?"

It stopped me in my tracks, and I asked, "What is an environmentalist? Do you mean environmentalists care about the land and the wildlife?" And she replied, "Yeah." So I answered, "Yeah, I'm a god-damned environmentalist! And I'm going to do something about it."

I didn't know how to be an environmentalist or how to get a job in environmental work, but that's when I decided I'd look, and that's how I came upon the National Audubon Society. Dave Cline [Audubon's Alaska Director at the time] needed a secretary, so I talked my way into the job, just by my interest and my degree in fish and wildlife management, and I could type 34 words per minute. That's how I got started with Audubon.

Bart: (laughing) I thought you were going to say 34 minutes per word!

Julie: But after 2 years I realized that I really wanted to work on issues, so I decided to leave my job as secretary and just volunteer for the chapter full-time. I got on first as the conservation chair, then later became president.

At that time, many of the Anchorage chapter members were biologists, both federal and state, wonderful guys with incredible knowledge, but no one really smiled very much. I always thought it odd that nobody laughed very much at meetings.

So that September, for the annual potluck and member slide show, I decided I would show slides of all the birds I saw over the summer without ever showing a single bird. And if I couldn't make those stick-in-the-mud biologists laugh, then I was going to quit!

I had a slide of a "Male Siberian Tit", which was a close-up of the bare booby of a male friend of mine. [Siberian Tit is the old name for Gray-headed Chickadee.] Then I had a "Male Denali Dabbling Duck", which was another friend of mine taking a make-shift shower outside in Denali; there was a tarp up, so all you could see was a little wet head sticking up above the tarp and his naked legs sticking down below the tarp. I said it was a dabbling duck that had unfortunately lost all his plumage. Then I had a slide of a "Red-eyed Vireo", which was close-up picture of a friend's blood-shot eye after a night of drinking. Luckily, the biologists laughed at the slides, so I stayed on as president.

During my years with Anchorage Audubon, the goal was to expand Potter Point State Game Refuge and protect Potter Marsh from encroaching development. Eventually the Alaska State Legislature expanded the refuge and renamed it the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge. However, we failed to convince the legislature to move the viewing pullouts along Potter Marsh to a nearby spot where there was already a short road into the marsh that was hidden from the highway; instead, the legislature allowed the parking and viewing area to be expanded right next to the highway and into the marsh, which destroyed a grebe nesting site.

Lorelei: Bart, I was reading your biography on the internet, and it said that over your 35-year career, you've played a leading role in securing lasting protection of more than 8 million acres of wild places. That is awesome. What projects are you working on now? What has inspired you to devote your life to wilderness issues?

Bart: None of those areas—and there are hundreds of them across the West and in Southeast Alaska that have been protected by Congress—none of them would have been protected without the grassroots, bedrock citizens that made it all come true. Without members of Audubon, or members of any other group, or people who weren't members of any group but cared deeply about a place, they never would have happened. They made all the difference in the world.

Every area that's ever been protected by Congress has a story, and every one of those stories start with people who care. I was just lucky enough to be in positions with various groups to help coordinate and support and organize and coach people to help get these places secured by law.

You talk about memorable experiences. One of the most memorable was 4:44 in the afternoon, November 28, 1990, when President George Bush the First signed the Tongass Timber Reform Act into law. Everyone who had worked so hard for the Tongass was hugging each other, and there were chills down our spines. The signing of that bill culminated a dedicated effort that lasted three days short of a decade.

It was one thing to know the law had been passed. The next tremendous moment was looking at the new map and seeing the newly protected places on that map—where you helped take the law into your own hands and worked with the government for the people, by the people, and of the people, and put democracy to work in some of its finest ways. Then it really hits you again. That's when the tears come to your eyes, and you know you really made a difference.

One of my favorite phrases about this kind of work is a quote from Rachel Carson, who basically said (and I may not get this quote exactly right): “Fighting for the planet is one of the finest forms of patriotism there is.”

The reason that 8 million acres came up: I was asked one day to add up all the bills and laws that I helped work on. Some of those included national monuments that were designated, so not every one of those acres is wilderness, but every one of those acres has received permanent protection, and every one of those areas is still alive and well. There are many more that need protection, so we’ll carry on.

What I’m working on now? I’m doing all Lower 48 grassroots, bedrock citizen efforts, trying to help people protect wild places that are near and dear to their heart. I’m working a lot with ranchers who are trying to protect places that are important to their way of life and their families and their heritage. That includes areas that are very different from the Tongass National Forest. A lot of these areas don’t have any trees on them, and a bunch of them are on National Grasslands in North and South Dakota, where there’s barely a tree in sight. I am also working with ranchers along the Mexico-Arizona border, northwest of Nogales, in a place full of cactus, ocotillo, and Emory’s oak—land where the jaguar is trying to make a comeback.

I’m working in central Idaho on the Boulder White Cloud Mountains, trying to get that land finally protected. I’m doing work in Wyoming with ranchers and conservationists, trying to get them to join forces and work together. I’m having a lot of fun.

Julie: Could I add something more about what brought me to Alaska? All of the wild lands. When you think about all the public land in Alaska... what more freedom is there when it’s yours? It’s all yours. I can go kayaking, and I can say, “Look, there’s a beautiful bay. I own it. I think I’ll go camp there.” The same thing when I lived in Anchorage. You’re driving up the highway, and you can say, “Wow, that ridge looks nice. Oh, look, here’s a pullout. Let’s park here and hike up to that ridge and camp out. It’s mine. I own it. I don’t have to ask for permission. There are no fences.” That’s the ultimate freedom.

Bart: Bob Marshall and the Wilderness Society founders talked about fighting for the freedom of the wilderness. As Julie was saying, what better freedom and liberty is there than knowing that you have a National Forest out there, and knowing you have a place on the map for you and your family, for people before and people to come in the future.

You talked about inspiration. I’ve been blessed to be able to follow my calling. I’ve never been able to figure out what I like better about this job: whether it’s helping to protect wonderful places up there in the wild lands, or working with all the wild and woolly characters that rise to the occasion, and the strong-spirited people that come to the forum and stand up for what’s right.

That gets to people who have been very inspiring to me, people who have been heroes to me who have deep Alaska roots. Two of them in particular are Celia Hunter and Mardy Murie. I’ve been fortunate enough to work with and for both of them and learned a great deal. I have been greatly inspired by their writings and their work.

Now that I keep counting, it’s 37 years that I’ve actually been paid for this, and 39 years since I actually started volunteering to protect places, starting when I was in grad school in Wyoming.

Lorelei: You both have helped Matt Kirchhoff for a few years now with his murrelet research in Southeast. What do you enjoy about doing field research? Tell me about some of the adventures—or misadventures—you’ve had over the years doing this work.

Julie: Marbled Murrelets have always been our favorite bird, because when we go kayaking, they’re always sitting there in pairs. We often kayak in a double, so there we are, paddling along on the water, also in a pair. The murrelets only let you get so close before they go down.

Bart: And when they pop back up, they're like little corks!

Julie: When Matt said he was thinking of doing research on Marbled Murrelets, I volunteered right away. And then when he said he was setting up a field camp in Port Snettisham, I thought, "Oh my gosh, my dream come true: to spend four months in a wilderness camp."

To this day I think the summers I worked for Matt were the four most fun and best summers of my life. Matt is fantastic to work for, and he is doing fantastic research on my favorite bird. And I don't think you could have a better indicator species than the Marbled Murrelet, because it's dependent upon the sea, and it's dependent upon the old-growth forest (although it has now been found that Marbled Murrelets do nest on the ground in cliffy areas, but in general they nest in old-growth trees).

Being out there, when your sole job is studying the one bird that you think is so cool, is such an honor and so wonderful. Every day you're steeped in nothing but wilderness and the wildlife that lives there. Seeing it all interacting together: that was the best part and the most fun.

In particular, while conducting the murrelet surveys in Icy Strait, we saw the total interconnectedness of everything in the sea—the whales, the sea lions, and every kind of seabird, not just the murrelets. It is stunning, when you're there day after day, to see how absolutely full of life Icy Strait is. In Port Snettisham we thought we were really cooking when we counted 85 or 100 murrelets flying through the scope every 15 minutes. But in Glacier Bay and Icy Strait, there were so many murrelets that we couldn't count fast enough. We conducted 15-minute surveys twice an hour from dawn to dusk, and sometimes we were counting over 2,000 birds in one 15-minute survey. We could hardly count fast enough. One time in Glacier Bay we had to put two people on two scopes; one person counted all the birds flying in one direction, and the other person counted the birds flying in the other direction. (We had to carefully calibrate our scopes to be the same power and aimed at the exact same spot so our counts were accurate.) At Point Adolphus, thousands of murrelets fly westward along the strait each morning, and then in the evening they fly back eastward.

To me, these huge numbers of murrelets, other birds, and whales just showed the extreme importance of the Icy Strait/Glacier Bay area. I really think Icy Strait needs some sort of protection. Matt and I have talked about this. Sooner or later somebody will figure out a way to take it away. Whether it's tidal power or something, it's gonna come. I believe tidal power is already being proposed. So, I think protecting Icy Strait, while still allowing commercial and sport fishing, is an issue that needs to be talked about.

Bart: Julie was the one who was working with Matt on a regular basis. I was able to take a week's vacation and volunteer for several years running. There are two memories that stick out for me, thinking about it right now. One is working at Point Adolphus at the south side of Icy Strait, doing flyway counts on the murrelets. We had a hard time concentrating, looking through the spotting scope, because there was so much activity on the water right in front of us. The area was so rich with feed and herring and other fish, and there were so many whales surfacing and breaching, and so many sea lions playing on the backs of the whales and intermingling with the whales and feeding and living together.

It was darn hard to keep counting and clicking away, trying to have some semblance of accuracy. But later, when we saw the results of the studies Matt had done based on some of the counts we had done, it was a pretty rewarding feeling to know that we contributed something to science that might help the species out.

The other memory that sticks out was when we were in Glacier Bay for Matt in 2007. It was a broader study that looked at different habitats for the Kittlitz's and the Marbled Murrelets and where they were, where they were concentrated, and where the edges of their habitats were.

I shouldn't complain about heat waves or the sun at all. But the times before, when we had done Icy Strait and Glacier Bay, we had gotten soaked with cold rain. We had worn every stitch of clothing and rain gear, as many layers as we possibly could to remain semi-coherent and functional.

So then in 2007 we packed all that stuff and were overdressed. Except for one t-shirt each, the lightest clothes we had was long underwear type stuff. Every day was in the 80s, which is heat stroke kind of weather for Glacier Bay. And we were roasting out in the sun. It was pretty comical. We almost ran out of water because the spring that was our water source kept drying up and drying up and drying up. We were perched on these outcroppings, overlooking the bays and straits and channels, and there was hardly any place to get shade. There weren't any trees on these rocky beaches, and the boulders on which we had to sit were too steep for a portable shade structure. We just sort of languished in the sun and suffered. It was a great 10 days.

We didn't see many birds; other people saw a lot more. But even not seeing the birds was science at work, right?

Lorelei: Being from Juneau, you must feel guilty to gripe about too much sun!

Bart: I know. This particular survey was at the same time as those big fires in the Yukon. The sun was this indescribable color of orange-red. There was smoke everywhere, but it was a beautiful place. It was so hot we couldn't even rest because we had to get up at four in the morning to do the counts, and then come back and try to sleep for a couple hours in the hot afternoon sun before going back out at dusk to do more counts. It was so hot you couldn't lie in the tent. I shouldn't be complaining, but it was a memorable volunteer job!

Lorelei: Julie, you talked about Icy Strait. Bart, in your opinion, what are one or two of the most pressing conservation issues facing Alaska today? And Julie, if you have any other issues to add, please do.

Julie: The Arctic Refuge, Teshekpuk Lake, and Pebble Mine are the first three that come to my mind, along with all the places in the Tongass that are still in need of protection. But, there are many, many more, and all are very important.

Bart: There are a number of them. It's a state full of superlatives.

The Arctic Coastal Plain is on-going—preserving that last little piece, compared to all the rest of the Arctic Coast, trying to keep the Arctic intact for its own sake and also for the sake of the people that have worked so hard to protect it over generations, going way back to when Olaus and Mardy Murie were there and first proposed that the area be protected as a wildlife refuge. One of these days, hopefully, Congress will find the wisdom to say, "Ok, enough is enough. We're not going to get enough oil out of there to make any difference. This area is too precious to drill. Period. We're going to rein ourselves in and show a little humility for the first time in our lives and do the right thing."

Equally as pressing is garnering protection for important fish, wildlife, subsistence, and recreation areas in the Tongass that have not yet been safeguarded by law.

There are so many others. It's still a matter of respect and responsibility, I think, that needs to be applied to the land and also to the people of the state and to the people of the country and to one another. And that gets into Pebble Mine. I mean, there's certainly no respect and responsibility from the company that's trying to do such an outrageous proposal with such unbelievable consequences if it ever went through.

There are issues throughout the state. I think in Southeast Alaska part of it is to try to come up with a way that people can live together over the long term without this continuous, entirely ultra-polarized view of the world between those who want to cut all the trees down and those who don't want any kind of timber industry whatsoever. I may be viewed as more moderate than some others, but I think having some small scale Tongass timber industry is a good thing. It keeps some traditions and heritage, and individual dignity and pride of the people who have been there logging for generations, the folks that are from Alaska, that have been in Alaska, and that stay in Alaska, not the contract loggers from somewhere else. These are people that have deep roots and care about sustaining their way of life and also everybody else's way of life. In Alaska our way of life is completely dependent on keeping large areas of the state wild and intact by law. It's kind of a sense of community that I think biologically exists in many wild places

but I don't think socially quite exists yet, where there's harmony among Alaskans that is stable enough to keep everything else functioning without dire threats to important parts of the state.

Julie: The most pressing issue? Boy that's really hard. The hardest part is there are so many wonderful places in Alaska. To have any of them destroyed? As Bart said, the Tongass Timber Reform Act was really bittersweet, because there are still a good million acres or so that didn't get protected that should have.

Bart: Basically the Tongass Timber Reform Act was a compromise in the end, and there are many areas that are still in need of protection that are highly valuable fish and wildlife areas, many of which John Schoen identified in his very complete and thorough wildlife study. I felt good that he verified that the areas that we were proposing for wilderness protection were the same areas that he was identifying as vital for fish and wildlife. In turn these places are vital to the people in small communities that are dependent on those watersheds.

Lorelei: OK, here's my last question: why have you chosen to support Audubon Alaska as an organization, and why have you chosen to name Audubon Alaska in your will?

Julie: We support Audubon Alaska and named it in our will because of the fantastic, competent people working there. We really respect their expertise, and their expertise backs up what we think should be protected.

Bart: Both Matt and John were very courageous spokespeople for protecting the Tongass National Forest when they were working for the State as wildlife biologists. They were definitely risking their jobs by speaking out during all those Congressional actions. This is our way to honor their courage and their support and their good work during those days. Then they retired and went to work for Audubon!

We do support a number of groups in Alaska, but Audubon has stood out over the years on a personal basis, I think. When we [at SEACC] first started out on our mission, our quest, to protect more of the Tongass in the early 1980s (which resulted in the Tongass Timber Reform Act protecting more than a million acres of high-value fish and wildlife habitat, and that was in addition to what was protected by the great work of the Alaska Lands Act)... when we were first starting out, we knew we had to set up an outpost, a beachhead in Washington, DC to start making our case. Of all the national groups in Washington, DC, Audubon was the only one that agreed to help us by giving us free office space.

Audubon gave us a little nook to work out of. And that was directly due to Dave Cline's support from Alaska, as well as two other key people and old friends of mine who worked for Audubon out of Washington, DC: Brock Evans and Brooks Yeager. They gave us a little office, a cubby hole, and you wouldn't believe how many people we crammed in there.

Julie: That size of office housed one Audubon person, but in the same-sized space, we fit in generally four to six people, sometimes nine.

Bart: There were people flowing into the halls. There were no windows in the office; we were given a piece of glass and a frame, and we put postcards on the inside of it so we could pretend we were actually looking out a window.

Julie: At the beginning Audubon said, "Sure, we'll give you space for a year." No other group would help us at the start because they all thought protecting more of the Tongass was impossible.

Bart: We basically just said, "It may be impossible. You think it's impossible; we don't. Just let us take the lead on this one. If you think we're crazy, fine. Please, let us go and run with it."

Julie: Audubon ended up kindly giving us that office space for six years!

Bart: And the Audubon office was within walking distance to the U.S. Senate and House. It was very convenient. There were times when we slept on the floor, and oftentimes we had lots of volunteers in and out. Sometimes when an Audubon person would go on the road for a week, we'd temporarily use their office and then quickly get out before they returned. My friend Brooks Yeager called this the amoeba effect. We'd sort of ooze in and out of any empty offices. They were a great group of people to work with, and they were very supportive. They were entertained by our mouse-that-roared, David-and-Goliath sort of willingness to take on the impossible odds of trying to save more of Southeast Alaska. The other groups began helping when they saw that something was really going to happen, and their help was a major and vital part of making the campaign successful. The help of each and every group was a critical component, and each worked very, very hard on the bill. But we've always felt we owed Audubon in general because of its faith in us at the very start. SEACC could not have afforded to even begin the campaign if Audubon hadn't done that.

Julie: It's a sense of indebtedness to Audubon for its help in making the Tongass Timber Reform Act happen, and our sense of indebtedness to Audubon for the great people it has hired for the Alaska office.

Bart: There are other groups in our will—not that we have much money to give—because it is a way to show our support of their good work. There are so many deserving groups doing great work all over Alaska and the U.S.

Julie: We don't have kids. Our creation was helping with the environment. It's a comfort to know that even after we go, conservation work will continue because we gave that money.

Bart: Dave Cline has retired, and Brock Evans and Brooks Yeager no longer work for Audubon, but at that time and that place, their support and spirit made all the difference in the world to us. We never would have gotten that legislation without Audubon being there for us.

Lorelei: That makes me feel good to work for Audubon!

Bart: They probably have fire code against cramming as many people per square inch as we did into that office.

Lorelei: I've always thought that it was a good sign of a creative organization if I joined the staff and there was no office space for me. When I first worked for Audubon, I was in the kitchen. And my job before that I was in the hall when I started.

Bart: At least when you're in the kitchen, you're closest to the beer!

Lorelei: Or at least the tea kettle!

Bart: Well, either way, some of it in the morning, some late in the day.

Julie: Okay, here's a tea and here's a beer to Audubon! Whatever we give when we pass away, it's more than we could give right now.

Lorelei: Well, the contributions you've made during your lifetime have been tremendous. And to be able to contribute something even after you've passed away... I think that's a really nice thought.

Bart: We're still doing all we can to help protect more places in the United States.