

Patagonia Sold To Fight Environmental Climate Crisis

Elsa Tullar, Staff Writer

After founding the outdoor apparel brand almost a half-century ago, the owner of Patagonia, Yvon Chouinard, sells his company to take a stance on the climate crisis and express his lifelong love for the environment.

On Wednesday, September 14th, 2022, Chouinard released to the public that he had officially transferred his 49-year-old company worth \$3 billion to a nonprofit organization, Holdfast Collective. This organization advocates for environmental causes and makes grants and investments that benefit the planet. Although Patagonia donates 1% of its proceeds yearly to support the climate crisis at hand, Chouinard realized he had to make a bigger action.

According to the letter Chouinard published, he had two options: sell the company and donate all money to organizations fighting for our planet, or take the company public so they could sell shares and raise additional capital. Neither of those options seemed like the best decision for what Chouinard and his team were trying to accomplish. The decision that the business decided on was to donate Patagonia to an organization that Chouinard trusts to help the



AHS student wearing a Patagonia fleece vest.

environmental crisis at hand.

“Truth be told, there were no good options available. So, we created our own,” Chouinard states in a letter recently published explaining Patagonia’s decision.

To ensure that this important deci-

sion will be successful for Chouinard’s business, 100% of the company’s voting stock will be transferred to Patagonia’s Purpose Trust, and 100% of the nonvoting stock will be transferred to Holdfast Collective, the nonprofit whose goal is to

defend nature.

“The Earth is now our only shareholder,” Chouinard said.

Patagonia will continue to operate as a private, profit-making business selling all of its fan-favorite apparel, including jackets, ski wear, hats, and shoes. However, Chouinard and his family will no longer have ownership. Instead, Holdfast Collective will receive the profits and invest them into climate change solutions rather than using the money to manufacture more products.

Billionaire or not, Chouinard acknowledges that the Earth’s resources are limited, and we as a community have to make big decisions and act fast before they are all gone. Aspen, Colorado’s seasons and lifestyle are dependent on a healthy planet so this decision directly impacts this town and teaches us that we need to make substantial changes to save our environment.

“If we have any hope of a thriving planet—much less a business—it is going to take all of us doing what we can with the resources we have,” Chouinard said, “This is another way we’ve found to do our part.”

By Elsa Tullar

Gray Wolves are Coming Home to Colorado

Elsa Tullar, Staff Writer

By December 2023, gray wolves are coming home to the Western Slope after 82 years.

The gray wolf is one of nature’s most powerful predators. With strong jaws and sharp canine teeth - reaching up to two and a half inches long, they have the ability to kill big game and livestock. Their remarkable intelligence and sense of smell allow them to track and hunt their prey for miles at a time. Gray wolves play a key role in keeping ecosystems healthy. They are known to hunt large game such as deer and elk, which plays an essential part in keeping these populations at healthy numbers.

Up until the point of eradication, gray wolves roamed across North America. In the 1970s, the U.S. declared these species endangered and placed them under the Endangered Species Act. Since the 1990s, they have slowly been reintroduced to their original habitats, and are now steadily increasing their numbers



Gray wolf roaming in the early morning in Yellowstone National Park, across the Rocky Mountains.

Gray wolves are a native species in Colorado but were eradicated from the state in the mid-1940s due to their impact on the numbers of livestock and game. This process was done by shooting, trapping, and poisoning this species. In the past decade, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has initiated the process for the state-led reintroduction of Gray Wolves in Colorado to restore this native canine.

Proposition 114, the Gray Wolf Reintroduction Initiative, was created and placed on the November 2020 ballot to ensure that the majority of Colorado was in favor of reviving the gray wolf species. Voting “yes” supported the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission (CWP) in developing a plan to reintroduce and manage gray wolf populations west of the Continental Divide. Although the vote was close, Colorado Proposition 114 ended up

winning with 1,590,299 votes to 1,533,313. This victory allowed the CWP to take action in the production of this drastic change to our ecosystem.

Although Proposition 114 was approved and taken into action, certain communities are concerned about bringing wolves back to the western slope. Farmers are uncertain about the potential threat that wolves pose to livestock. However, Proposition 114 promises to replace and compensate for any lost livestock due to wolves. Additionally, hunters are skeptical of this idea because of the potential

change in game patterns.

The controversy surrounding wolves has been present in Colorado for many years now. However, many people believe that wolves deserve to live in the habitat where they once thrived. Welcoming gray wolves back into Colorado will allow our ecosystem’s biodiversity to increase which has the potential to create a long-lasting effect on our ecosystem, leading to a healthier and more sustainable environment in the future.

Photo by Lucy McBride