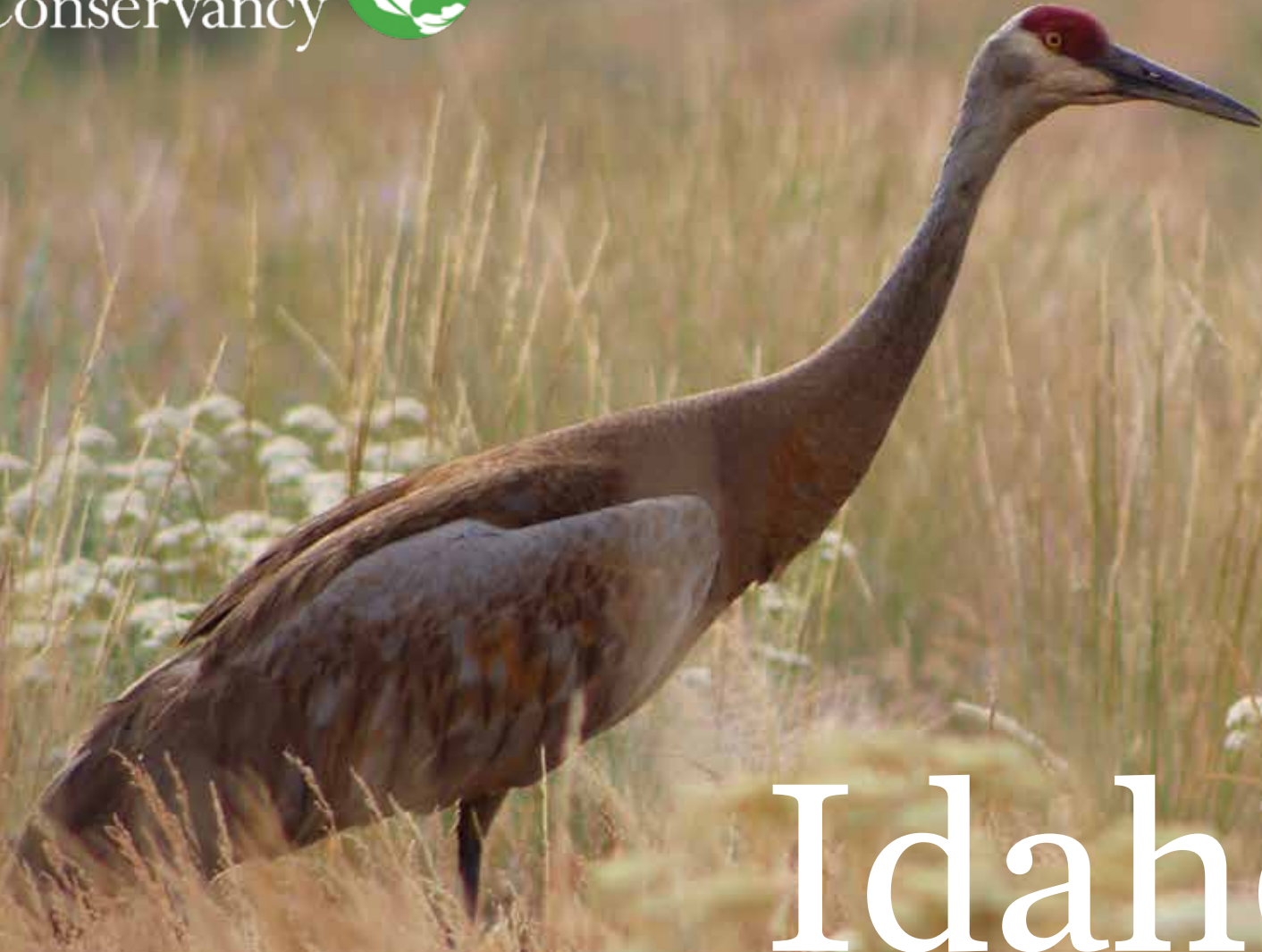


The Nature
Conservancy



Idaho

2022 IMPACT REPORT

DIRECTOR'S DESK

Nature shows us at every turn that we are dependent on community for our very survival. We see it all the time: diverse wildlife and plant species working together for mutual benefit.

It is no coincidence that collaboration is the foundation of our success at The Nature Conservancy. This value is more important than ever as our conservation challenges become more urgent and the solutions more complex. As I look back on the past year, it's clear that TNC could not have achieved our outcomes without creative partners who were willing to be innovative.

For example, a remarkable project in eastern Idaho would not have been possible without the support of a conservation-minded couple. Because of their willingness to act quickly and deep care for the land, TNC was able to close on an ecologically significant property in the Henrys Fork area. Hundreds of acres of priority habitat will now be protected for iconic wildlife like pronghorn, grizzly bears and bald eagles that need these lands for seasonal migration.

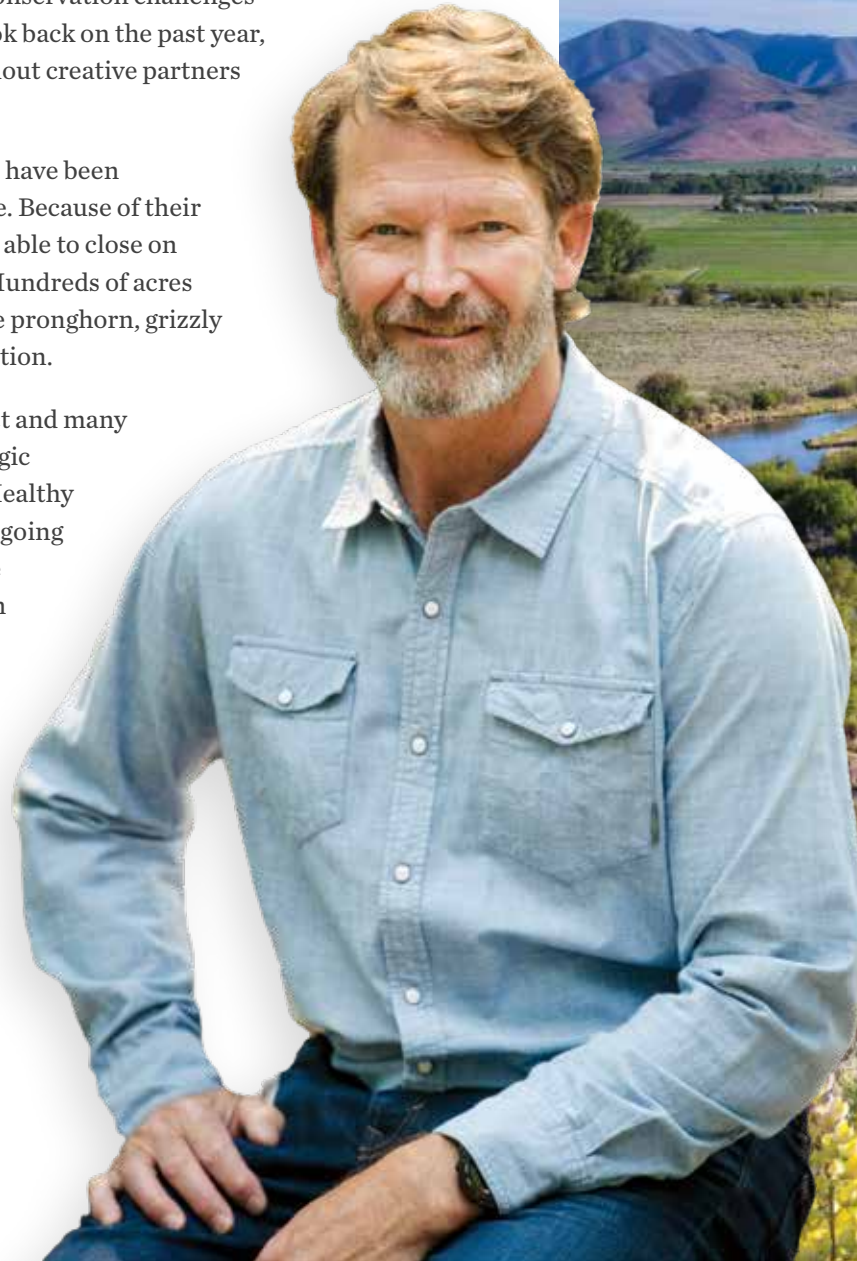
In this year's impact report, you'll read more about this project and many others where we are making an impact across our three strategic priorities: Climate Action; Land & Water Conservation; and Healthy Soil, Resilient Waters. You'll also learn about our Chapter's ongoing journey to grow in our understanding and inclusion of diverse communities. To deliver equitable solutions, we must broaden our relationships to include those most impacted by climate change and conservation challenges.

We are deeply grateful for all the partners and collaborators who make this work possible—including you, our supporters. We couldn't do this without you.

Your friend in conservation,



MARK MENLOVE
Idaho State Director





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.....

The Nature Conservancy acknowledges that the lands and waters of this place we know as Idaho are the ancestral homelands of many Indigenous peoples. Today they are represented by the Coeur d'Alene, the Kootenai, the Nez Perce, the Shoshone-Bannock and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes. We are deeply grateful to these Indigenous peoples, past and present, who have stewarded these lands and waters since time immemorial. We affirm our responsibility to honor Tribal sovereignty, culture and heritage, and to work in allyship to ensure a future where all people and nature thrive.



Land & Water Conservation



Conserving Habitat in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

Ranch acquisition ensures that critical corridors remain connected for migrating wildlife

On the eastern border of Idaho, a 634-acre working ranch sits between the wildlife-rich areas of Henrys Lake and Yellowstone National Park. The expansive property is a central piece within an ecologically significant landscape where some of Idaho's most iconic and at-risk species live, roam and migrate throughout the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The Nature Conservancy has been working for decades to conserve habitat throughout the Henrys Lake area and long ago identified the high conservation value of this specific property. Under intense pressure from development, the property and its surrounding areas provide crucial migration corridors and habitat. When the ranch was platted for subdivision—which would have devastating consequences for wildlife—TNC knew it was an urgent moment to act.

This fall, through the generous support of donors and a partnership with conservation investment firm Beartooth Group, TNC successfully purchased the property and will now complete a conservation easement that permanently protects this irreplaceable landscape.

“This project will help ensure the survival and resiliency of wildlife by connecting and protecting critical habitat,” says TNC Conservation Director Laurel Angell. “We are grateful to the former landowners who recognized the ranch's importance and TNC's dedicated supporters and partners that made this success possible.”

With sagebrush steppe, open grasslands and marshy wetlands, the area is home to a diversity of wildlife including peregrine falcons, wolves, bald eagles, grizzly bears and trumpeter swans. The ranch is especially important for pronghorn who rely on it heavily during seasonal migration. Native Yellowstone cutthroat trout also depend on the property where portions of Howard Creek, a critical spawning stream, run through.

“This project presents an extraordinary opportunity to protect habitat and migration corridors in one of the most significant ecosystems in the West,” says Tess O'Sullivan, TNC land conservation strategy lead. “Conserving this property advances years of work in the area and creates pathways to even greater conservation outcomes in the future.”

“

Conserving this property advances years of work in the area and creates pathways to even greater conservation outcomes in the future.”

TESS O'SULLIVAN
Land Conservation Strategy Lead





Climate Action

Building support for solutions

Amplifying Climate Conversations

Since joining The Nature Conservancy as our first climate program manager in Idaho, Jillian Hanson has been building the Chapter's climate initiative. At the heart of this strategy is creating a constructive dialogue on what climate change and its solutions mean for Idahoans. By illuminating the urgency of the climate crisis, offering solutions and finding common ground, we can shift the narrative on climate change to motivate policymakers and communities to act.

Over the past year, the climate team has developed and led climate communications trainings for TNC staff and trustees, the Idaho Coalition of Land Trusts, the Idaho Climate Forum and a broad audience of land trust staff around the Northwest. Through the trainings, the team is sharing resources and skills to increase climate conversations in communities across Idaho. "Activating communities to speak up about climate issues is a critical step in building the political will to implement solutions," says Jillian.

“

Activating communities to speak up about climate issues is a critical step in building the political will to implement solutions.”

JILLIAN HANSON
Climate Program Manager



ONLINE

Learn more about climate action at
nature.org/idahoclimate

Scan the QR Code to access the page.

Planning a Resilient Economic Future

In December 2021, the McClure Center for Public Policy Research published the Idaho Climate-Economy Impacts Assessment, with TNC representatives serving on the report’s executive committee. The first report of its kind for Idaho, the Assessment features research on how climate change increases economic risk across Idaho’s key economic sectors: agriculture, energy, forests, human health, infrastructure, land and recreation and tourism. It also presents opportunities to adapt to these changes and helps decision makers plan for a vibrant future for Idaho.

As a critical resource, the Assessment has been shared with hundreds of Idaho leaders across environmental, industry, health and policy sectors, with TNC helping organize presentations and bolster social media outreach. TNC also supported the Spanish translation of the Assessment’s key findings to help expand access to the research among Idaho’s Spanish-speaking communities. Engaging diverse communities in conversations about climate impacts is important to help ensure inclusive and lasting solutions.

Advocating for Conservation Funding

Decades of conservation successes have been made possible across Idaho, thanks to TNC’s efforts to defend and advocate for sound policy. Federal conservation programs and public funding sources allow us to be even more ambitious in driving transformative solutions at scale. These include the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which upholds TNC’s belief that nature is essential infrastructure and our foundation for thriving.

Signed into law with bipartisan support, including support from Idaho Senators Crapo and Risch, this historic bill makes \$1.2 trillion available over the next five years for investment in a wide range of infrastructure, including more than \$200 billion dedicated to conservation, restoration, climate change mitigation and energy-related provisions.





Land & Water Conservation

Conserving landscapes to face a changing climate



Advancing Restoration and Education at Silver Creek

A wide and shallow section of Stalker Creek has been restored to a healthy, winding creek with diverse habitats—healing years of erosion in a priority area of Silver Creek Preserve. This restoration project, part of the ongoing Silver Creek Enhancement Plan, will create system-wide improvements to stream flow, aquatic habitat and climate resiliency.

Ecological monitoring at the project site is already underway. Isabella Cronin, a summer intern at the Preserve and Wood River Valley resident, spent much of her internship sampling macroinvertebrates—insects in their larval stages that are important indicators of water quality. Isabella's samples will provide the baseline data to analyze the project's success.

Isabella also shared her passion for conservation by developing educational activities for students in the new Conservation and Education Center (pictured left).

"I think it's really important to bring kids into nature and foster a love for the environment at a young age because that's what I experienced growing up in Hailey," says Isabella. Education and outreach will remain a priority as The Nature Conservancy continues to develop programming.



Expanding National Forest Partnerships

Indigenous peoples have strategically used fire to steward the land for many millennia. Yet today, our relationship with fire has changed, and safe, controlled burns have largely been excluded from the places that need it. As a result, many of the forests we depend on are increasingly unhealthy and vulnerable to severe wildfires. It is critical to reintroduce prescribed fire as a tool to make our forests and communities more resilient.

This year, TNC's prescribed fire program expanded to North Idaho through a partnership with the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. Modeled after TNC's work with the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, the new agreement enables us to deploy experienced, trained crews to implement thinning and prescribed burning. By expanding our work with the U.S. Forest Service, TNC is adding prescribed fire capacity that, over the long-term, will help match the scale of the need.



“

... it's really important to bring kids into nature and foster a love for the environment at a young age ...”

ISABELLA CRONIN
Silver Creek Preserve Intern



ONLINE

Learn more about conservation at nature.org/idahoconservation

Scan the QR Code to access the page.

Beginning a Journey of Inclusion and Allyship

In order to create a world where both nature and people thrive, we must acknowledge the stewardship of the natural world practiced by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. Part of this acknowledgment is recognizing the conservation movement's history of exclusion. Our Chapter is committed to greater accountability, justice and inclusion and we are taking steps to educate ourselves about Indigenous cultures.

In April, staff participated in TNC Western Division's Indigenous-Led Conservation conference, where we learned about our colleagues' partnerships with Tribes across North America. Idaho staff also attended a workshop with members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to learn about effective allyship and acknowledging past harms. Dedicating time to learning and action will help us become better co-creators of conservation strategies, deepen our understanding of Indigenous kinship and knowledge, and ultimately ensure that our work benefits all.



Healthy Soil, Resilient Waters

Creating a healthier future for people and nature



Conserving Water with Regenerative Agriculture

Conant Creek, home to an array of cold-water fish including Yellowstone cutthroat trout, originates in the Teton Range before flowing into a tributary of the Henrys Fork. This spring, the Henry's Fork Foundation successfully applied to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program and was granted funding for a project benefiting Conant Creek. The project will create water savings through improved irrigation infrastructure and water storage.

As a member of the Upper Snake River Collaborative—a multi-organizational partnership focused on enhancing river flow and water quality in the Henrys Fork basin—The Nature Conservancy is aiding the efforts by working with local farmers to implement regenerative practices to build soil health. Healthy soil is better able to absorb and retain water, reducing the amount of water needed for growing crops, while also reducing sediment runoff and pollution in our watersheds. As Idaho's water supplies continue to fluctuate, these collaborative efforts are an effective strategy for working together to achieve water conservation goals and improve resiliency to drought.

“

We believe in soil health practices because we see firsthand the difference it makes for our crops and bottom line.”

TODD BALLARD

TNC Agriculture Partner and Soil Health Advocate



ONLINE

Learn more about healthy soil at nature.org/idahoagriculture

Scan the QR Code to access the page.

Becoming Trout-Safe Certified at Silver Creek

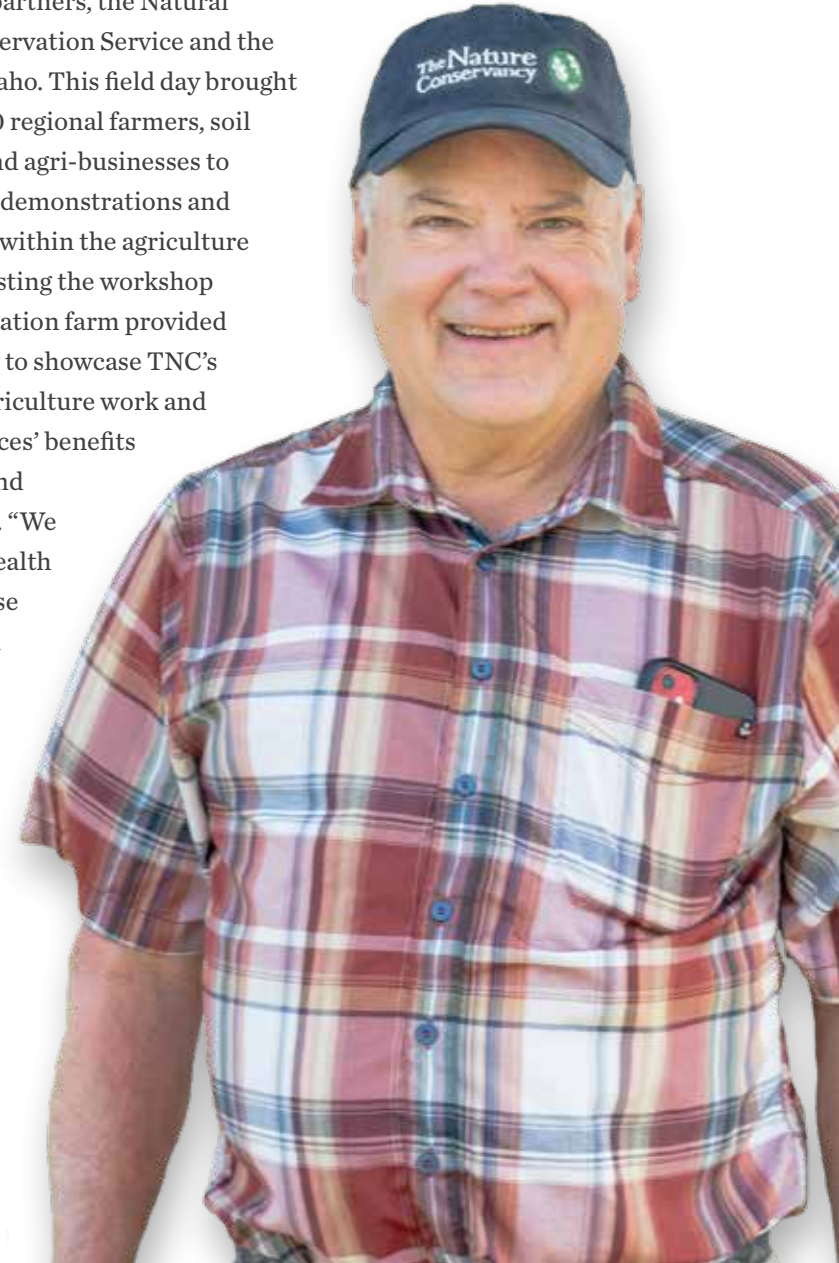
When TNC purchased the properties that became Silver Creek Preserve, the acquisition also included approximately 100 acres of surrounding farmland. These lands are leased to local farmers who have commonly used conventional agriculture practices. This year, TNC worked with one of the lessees to implement regenerative practices—including crop diversification and cover crops—that will enhance Silver Creek’s soil health, biodiversity and water quality.

This transition also opened a new opportunity for TNC to partner with Salmon-Safe, an ecolabeling and accreditation organization. The croplands have received their first-ever Trout-Safe certified farm designation. Through the program, TNC is demonstrating how regenerative agriculture has far-reaching ecological impacts that even benefit fish.



Sharing Soil Health in Action

Todd Ballard and his family have been farming in Kimberly, Idaho for over 100 years. A soil health advocate, Todd partnered with TNC to create a regenerative agriculture demonstration farm on his land. This past summer, TNC hosted the Magic Valley Soil Health Forum there, along with our partners, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the University of Idaho. This field day brought together over 70 regional farmers, soil professionals and agri-businesses to share hands-on demonstrations and lessons learned within the agriculture community. Hosting the workshop at the demonstration farm provided the opportunity to showcase TNC’s regenerative agriculture work and share the practices’ benefits for soil health and water retention. “We believe in soil health practices because we see firsthand the difference it makes for our crops and bottom line,” says Todd.



Thank You

The Nature Conservancy's accomplishments are only made possible by the many individuals, organizations, businesses and foundations that made gifts to our vital conservation programs during fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021—June 30, 2022). Every gift, regardless of size, plays a crucial role in our work—for people and nature. We thank you for your commitment to our mission.

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Donor Profile: Gretchen Sherlin and Michael Harkins

By Elizabeth "Lizard" Cashin, Donor Relations Manager

To the inexperienced eye, sagebrush country can seem void, empty. Idaho Legacy Club members Gretchen Sherlin and Michael Harkins know better—their 40-acre property on the Camas Prairie is teeming with life.

A visit to their plot captivates the senses. A snowy Soldier Mountain looms in the distance, pronghorn move freely across the land, meadowlarks fill the air with song, and vibrant camas flowers blanket the ground.

This thriving habitat reflects years of restoration work Gretchen and Michael have done on the property. Their efforts have included installing wildlife-safe fencing, planting over 150 sagebrush seedlings for sage grouse and tirelessly working to remove noxious weeds by hand.

The passion and heart required to embark on a restoration journey like this is simply incredible. We are grateful for Gretchen and Michael's dedication and their stewardship of this land.

“

We became members of the Legacy Club because we feel The Nature Conservancy is preserving and protecting the earth we live on and its inhabitants.”

MICHAEL HARKINS & GRETCHEN SHERLIN
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