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8
9 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
10 **EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

11
12 THE UNITED STATES SPORTSMEN’S
ALLIANCE FOUNDATION, an Ohio
13 nonprofit corporation; SAFARI CLUB
INTERNATIONAL, an Arizona nonprofit
14 corporation; and CONGRESSIONAL
SPORTSMEN’S FOUNDATION, a
15 Washington, D.C. nonprofit corporation,

16 Plaintiffs,

17 v.

18 ROB BONTA, in his official capacity as
Attorney General of the State of California;
19 and DOES 1-25, inclusive,

20 Defendants.
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Case No. 2:22-cv-01395- DAD-JDP

**Declaration of Evan Heusinkveld in
Support of Plaintiffs’ Motion for
Preliminary Injunction**

*[Filed concurrently with Motion for
Preliminary Injunction; Appendix of
Evidence; and Proposed Order]*

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1 I, Evan J. Heusinkveld, state and declare as follows:

2 1. I am the Chief Executive Officer and President of The Sportsmen’s
3 Alliance Foundation (“Sportsmen’s Alliance”), a plaintiff in the above-entitled
4 action. I submit this declaration in support of Plaintiffs’ Motion for Preliminary
5 Injunction. The matters set forth herein are of my own personal knowledge and, if
6 called upon to do so, I could and would competently testify thereto.

7 2. Sportsmen’s Alliance is an Ohio nonprofit corporation headquartered
8 in Columbus, Ohio, and registered in the State of California as an out of state
9 nonprofit corporation.

10 3. With the support of thousands of members and donors nationwide,
11 Sportsmen’s Alliance works to protect and advance our nation’s outdoor heritage of
12 hunting, fishing, trapping, and shooting in all 50 state legislatures.

13 4. Among other activities, Sportsmen’s Alliance organizes, sponsors, and
14 administers youth-oriented conservation programs and courses, including in
15 California.

16 5. In 2001, Sportsmen’s Alliance created the *Trailblazer Adventure*
17 program, a youth-oriented program designed to reach a new generation of hunters
18 and anglers by introducing youth and their families to an outdoor lifestyle. The
19 *Trailblazer Adventure* program served 2 million participants across the nation.

20 6. Sportsmen’s Alliance expanded its work to attract new
21 conservationists through the development of the *Families Afield* program. The
22 hallmark of the *Families Afield* program is a “try before you buy” approach that
23 allows new hunters to obtain an apprentice license and hunt under the watchful eye
24 of an experienced hunter before taking a hunter education course. The program has
25 been implemented in 42 states and surpassed 2.5 million apprentice hunting
26 licenses sold. Through its continued advocacy and with the support of its members
27 and donors, Sportsmen’s Alliance desires to grow the *Families Afield* program to
28 additional states, including California.

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1 7. Most recently, in 2020, Sportsmen’s Alliance launched the
2 *Conservation Adventures* program, which aims to address critical gaps in education
3 concerning wildlife and habitat conservation; specifically, the North American
4 Model of Conservation. The goal of *Conservation Adventures* is to implement a
5 conservation-based educational curriculum in high schools across the country. This
6 curriculum includes training modules, chapters, and discussions of hunting, firearm
7 use, the shooting sports, and their beneficial impact on fish and wildlife
8 conservation nationwide.

9 8. In support of its mission, Sportsmen’s Alliance publishes “The
10 Sportsmen’s Advocate,” the official magazine of Sportsmen’s Alliance, which is
11 distributed to Sportsmen’s Alliance members and supporters across the country,
12 including in California.

13 9. The Sportsmen’s Advocate and other Sportsmen’s Alliance
14 publications regularly contain marketing and advertising of firearm-related products
15 as well as articles, photographs, and other media discussing and depicting youth
16 engagement in conservation activities, including hunting with firearms and the
17 shooting sports.

18 10. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 1** is a true and correct copy of the Summer
19 2022 edition of “The Sportsmen’s Advocate.” Attached hereto as **Exhibit 2** is a
20 true and correct copy of the Spring 2022 edition of “The Sportsmen’s Advocate.”
21 Attached hereto as **Exhibit 3** is a true and correct copy of the “Conservation
22 Adventures” youth brochure. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 4** is a true and correct
23 copy of the Spring 2020 edition of “Conservation Adventures” magazine.

24 11. In the normal course of my duties as Sportsmen’s Alliance’s Chief
25 Executive Officer and President, I have reviewed and am generally familiar with
26 California Business and Professions Code section 22949.80 (“Section 22949.80”),
27 added by California Assembly Bill 2571, and amended by Assembly Bill 160.
28

1 12. The codification of Section 22949.80 has caused great concern and
2 confusion in our organization, and among Sportsmen’s Alliance’s advertisers and
3 partners, and youth and adult members. In view of Section 22949.80, Sportsmen’s
4 Alliance is unsure what can and cannot be communicated to its current and
5 prospective members.

6 13. Sportsmen’s Alliance desires to advertise, market, or arrange for
7 placement of advertising or marketing communications related to its programs and
8 events, which may depict minors engaged in the shooting sports or using firearms
9 and firearm-related products. Sportsmen’s Alliance’s publications regularly feature
10 youth-oriented content as well as advertisements of firearms and firearm-related
11 products. Sportsmen’s Alliance is unsure whether such communications violate the
12 prohibitions of Section 22949.80.

13 14. Although Sportsmen’s Alliance believes that Section 22949.80 is
14 unconstitutional, it fears that engaging in any advertising or marketing
15 communications where it is unclear whether the communications violate Section
16 22949.80 will result in enforcement actions against Sportsmen’s Alliance, and/or
17 expose Sportsmen’s Alliance to liability in private civil actions authorized by
18 Section 22949.80, subjecting Sportsmen’s Alliance to substantial monetary
19 penalties and other liabilities that could jeopardize Sportsmen’s Alliance’s business
20 and other lawful activities.

21 15. Sportsmen’s Alliance has consequently frozen any advertising and
22 marketing activities that *might* conceivably violate Section 22949.80’s prohibitions.
23 Sportsmen’s Alliance’s inability to engage in such advertising and marketing
24 activities is likely to have a devastating impact on Sportsmen’s Alliance’s mission
25 in the State of California and on its current and prospective youth members.

26 16. Sportsmen’s Alliance has also paused its efforts to begin
27 implementation of its *Conservation Adventures* program in California out of fear
28 that such activities *might* be prohibited by Section 22949.80.

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I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 18 day of October 2022, in Columbus, Ohio.



Evan Heusinkveld

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EXHIBIT 1

THE SPORTSMEN'S ADVOCATE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

SUMMER 2022

A photograph of two hunters in a field. The older hunter on the left is wearing a tan jacket and a cap, holding a shotgun. The younger hunter on the right is wearing a brown beanie and a camouflage jacket, holding a duck. A dog is visible in the water in the foreground. The word "CANCELLED!" is written in large, red, bold letters across the center of the image.

CANCELLED!

**Social Media and the Fight
for the Future of Hunting**

**PLUS: How to Combat the
Cancel Culture Movement**

What the Midterms
Mean for Sportsmen

Sierra Club Seeks to
Close Public Hunting Lands

Member News and Highlights, **P. 36**



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THE SPORTSMEN'S ADVOCATE

VOLUME 1 · ISSUE 2

24



FEATURES

20 What the Midterms Mean for Sportsmen

As we gear up for the midterm elections, there is one key aspect that could benefit hunters, trappers and anglers. But we must be diligent in protecting and promoting our interests. *By Todd Adkins*

24 Could Hunting Become Canceled?

Most so-called social justice warriors understand very little about hunting, but that doesn't stop them from hatefully attacking those of us who actively contribute to conservation. *By Ron Spomer*

28 How to Beat the Cancel Culture Movement

While our gut reaction may be to engage cancel culture with equal aggression, a more thoughtful approach that educates a non-hunting audience on conservation is a better play. *By Todd Adkins*

32 Public Opinion Matters

We talk strategy with our vice president of government affairs to outline ways sportsmen can influence the general public and score big wins for our pastimes. *By Brian Lynn*

THE SPORTSMEN'S ADVOCATE

VOLUME 1 · ISSUE 2

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**MELISSA
BACHMAN**

PROUD MEMBER
**SPORTSMEN'S
ALLIANCE**



**SPORTSMAN
CHANNEL**

SUNDAYS 11:30AM ET
MONDAYS 7PM ET

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Ron Spomer, John Taranto**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

As summer's heat peaks, the legislative sessions in most states have cooled. It's as welcome of a reprieve for our government affairs team as air conditioning during these August afternoons. The 2022 legislative season, which started in January, was a hot one with anti-hunting advocates attacking sportsmen at every level of government—in the legislatures, with petitions, at the commission level and during open-comment periods. They threw everything they had at us, and we, as a hunting community, came together and answered their attacks at every level. We worked together to protect our passions.

It's in that same vein that each of us must engage with anti- and non-hunters year-round. Each of our individual actions and comments, ever important in the legislative and game-management processes, is just as important every single day on social media.

Today's cancel culture embraces keyboard warriors who pretend to advocate for social justice, and hunters often find themselves in the crosshairs of those spewing ignorance of wildlife management while virtue signaling in their echo chambers.

The problem, as you'll see discussed multiple times in this issue, is that these virtual trolls can pose real-life threats to each of us individually and to the entirety of the hunting community. The Sportsmen's Alliance has helped several people—notably women and children—who have been targeted on social media, those who have been "doxed" and had their livelihoods threatened, as well as those appearing in mainstream media firestorms. That's one level of threat, but in the Information Age, it's easier than ever for someone to move from recreational outrage and spewing threats in their mother's basement to showing up on your doorstep and doing physical harm to you or loved ones. Looking at the bigger picture, knee-jerk legislation from contrived social-media campaigns can ultimately end with the loss of a hunting season or method.

The answer to cancel culture hatred is *thoughtfulness*. Be thoughtful in what you post and how you respond to anti- and non-hunters, and we—each of us individually—can better protect our passions.



Evan Heusinkveld
President and CEO

The Sportsmen's Advocate is the official publication of the Sportsmen's Alliance.

Our mission is to protect and advance America's heritage of hunting, fishing and trapping by uniting sportsmen to protect against legal and legislative attacks by the animal-rights movement, win public support for outdoor sports, ensure the future of this heritage by involving families in the outdoor experience, and by promoting the sportsmen's stewardship role in the scientific management of America's fish and wildlife.

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BE RELENTLESS





BIDEN ADMINISTRATION PUSHES LEAD BAN

PROPOSING A NEW RULE FOR WILDLIFE REFUGES THAT APPEASES RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS, THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION COULD FORCE SPORTSMEN TO FIND AND USE EXPENSIVE ALTERNATIVES TO LEAD.

When the Sportsmen's Alliance first sounded the alarm concerning the Biden administration negotiating with extreme environmentalists over hunting and fishing

expansions on the National Wildlife Refuge System, some accused us of playing politics.

What has transpired, however, is exactly what we said was going to happen (and we're not surprised).


Having written the *1997 Refuge Improvement Act*, the expertise of the Sportsmen's Alliance is hard to overstate in this realm. While everything is playing out exactly as we said, the effects of our political pushback has resulted in anything but partisan politics. A universal objection to the settlement talks undertaken by the Department of Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with the Center for Biological Diversity has risen in our community and with political leaders. A coalition of more than 40 hunting and fishing conservation and advocacy groups submitted a letter in opposition to the negotiations. A bipartisan group of 33 U.S. House of Representatives members and 27 U.S. Senators followed suit by filing their own letters of opposition to the closing of present and future refuges or the banning of lead ammunition and fishing gear.

A ban on lead fishing tackle would include many of the common weights used by anglers for bass, panfish, trout and other species.



The Biden administration's most current proposal, however, lays the groundwork for additional lead prohibitions on refuges and provides a precedent to ban lead ammunition and tackle on all public lands.

The USFWS proposed a rule banning lead on new hunting and fishing opportunities on national wildlife refuges and called for a new study on the impacts of lead ammunition and tackle system-wide. While the USFWS referred to "science" in the rulemaking as a basis for this decision, the agency did not cite any actual studies on lead ammunition or tackle to support the decision.

"The proposed lead ban on refuges kicks open the barn door to banning lead ammunition and tackle on all federal land, including national forests, Bureau of Land Management lands, national preserves and other areas," said Todd Adkins, vice president of government affairs for the Sportsmen's Alliance. "The North American wildlife model requires fish and game managers to use scientific evidence to support decision making, but this proposed rule has none of that." 

Bullets that contain lead in their construction are popular, effective and among the least expensive projectiles for deer.



WHERE THIS LEAD BAN COULD GO

A dangerous progression may include all federal and state public lands.

Given the government's power to withhold federal funding to states, the Biden administration's proposed lead ban could easily move from the National Wildlife Refuge System to all federal and state public lands. Here's how:

File a Lawsuit

Environmentalists file a sweeping lawsuit to end hunting and use of lead. The case gives the administration cover to implement something they covet anyway.

Enter Settlement Talks

Agree to closed-door settlement talks under guise of "it's just policy."

Propose and Pass a New Rule

Initiate a new rule that satisfies environmentalists and applies only to future expansions of hunting and fishing opportunities.



Expand Rule to All Refuges

Due to either confusion caused by a patchwork of regulations or the results of the proposed "study," extend the lead ban to the entire refuge system.

Expand Rule to All Federal Land

Leaning into the study and now-attained precedent, the lead ban can be extended by this or a future administration, or possibly another lawsuit by environmentalists.

Withhold State Funding

The federal government can't force states to do many things, such as set a universal speed limit. However, it can withhold federal funding from states that don't meet certain "guidelines." Using that leverage, the federal government could extend the lead ban to all states by withholding funding, including dedicated federal excise-tax dollars, unless and until a lead ban is in place.



SIERRA CLUB PUSHES NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION IN THE NORTHEAST

THE RADICAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION CONTINUES ITS DECADE-LONG ATTEMPT TO LOCK-UP PUBLIC LANDS.

The Sierra Club has renewed its push to change the 70,000-acre Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area into a national park and preserve, thereby closing off tens of thousands of acres to hunting for area sportsmen. Only this year, they didn't try to push a bill through Congress, but hoped to do so through underhanded maneuvering while political winds were blowing in their favor.

For the last decade, the Sierra Club—led by their New Jersey chapter—has fought for the change of designation under the guise of increased funding. Their plan was to re-designate a large portion of the area as the Delaware River National Park and whatever was leftover would have been re-designated the Lenape Preserve. They claim the “Preserve” status for some portion of the property would allow for hunting; however, sportsmen know, and have seen firsthand in West Virginia when the New River Gorge designation changed (see sidebar), that a critical loss of huntable acres is what results from this maneuver.

The Sierra Club wasn't shy about their intentions and why they were pushing so hard this session; from their website: “... we're aware that the current favorable climate in Congress is tenuous. We are

If Congress were to reclassify the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area as a park and preserve, the move would likely result in a loss of hunting access.

working to get this legislation passed in the current session ... The change could happen as simply as with the attachment of a rider to an appropriations bill.”

In short, they hoped to accomplish this change through political malfeasance. There was no bill introduced, so there wouldn't be a chance to speak out against it in hearings—no testimony or no debate. They hoped to attach a rider to a spending bill and to take thousands of acres of public land from hunters just that easily.

“Changing the designation to a national park and preserve is just the first step. After that, comes rules changes and federal interference in seasons and methods. The Sportsmen's Alliance has had to fight for years to protect the right of Alaska to manage hunting practices in federal parks and preserves. If you don't think they'll try similar things at Delaware Water Gap then you're gravely mistaken,” said Evan Heusinkveld, president and CEO of Sportsmen's Alliance. “This continual attack on sportsmen is unconscionable, especially in the Northeast where hunting areas are severely limited to begin with.”



A STUDY IN LOSS

West Virginia's New River Gorge first entered National Park Service as a recreational area in 1978, and at the time, hunters were assured no loss of access. In December 2020, however, it received the National Park designation. With that change, no increase in funding was received and an influx of visitors that has overwhelmed infrastructure has resulted. Likewise, 10 percent of the area's 72,000 acres was entered under the “park” designation. While 65,000 acres remain open to hunting, more than 7,000 acres of the most rugged terrain and best hunting was lost.

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Anti's Push NATIONWIDE CONTEST BAN IN U.S. HOUSE

ALL-STAR CAST OF ANTI-HUNTING LEGISLATORS PROPOSE
FEDERAL BAN FOR WILDLIFE-KILLING CONTESTS ON PUBLIC LAND.

Having mixed success banning wildlife-killing contests at the state level, animal-rights activists have now focused on passing legislation at the federal level. House Resolution 7398 prohibits organized contests where wildlife is killed for prizes, inducements or entertainment on federal public land.

The battle over contests perfectly illustrates the animal-rights gameplan in a microcosm. When activists first started targeting bans, the focus was solely on coyote contests in Arizona and New Mexico. As they pushed similar legislation in California, Washington, Colorado, Oregon and Montana, the goalposts were moved to protect anything from “all predators” to “all wildlife.” Their blitzkrieg crossed the northern U.S. and hit East Coast states like New York, New Jersey and Vermont before returning to Nevada in the West—where the proposed penalty for participation or even promotion was a felony!

Faced with opposition from the Sportsmen's Alliance, the movement has been forced to dial back their egregiousness and carve out exemptions. HR 7398 exempts turkey, deer and duck hunting, as well as field trials associated with a national organization.

“This bill is a perfect example of how anti-hunters don't attack socially acceptable hunting endeavors like deer and duck hunting outright. Instead, they keep striking at predator management to gain a toehold, which they'll later use to push bans on everything else,” said Sportsmen's Alliance Vice President of Government Affairs Todd Adkins.

The bill's sponsors ignore the use of derbies and contests to reduce the number of predators, such as coyotes, wolves, bobcats and foxes, in very focused areas prior to calving season for livestock and ungulates, as well as nesting season for upland birds and waterfowl.

HR 7398 would further hamstring efforts to control coyote numbers by forbidding predator contests on lands

controlled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service. In most cases, the federal government defers to state fish and wildlife agencies for management plans involving species that are not migratory or endangered. However, now national animal-rights groups have targeted wildlife contests nationwide and have recruited their most reliable anti-hunting allies in Congress to carry this legislation; it's a who's who of anti-hunters, including New Mexico Rep. Raul Grijalva, who chairs the House Natural Resources Committee, which is the final hurdle before a vote in the full House of Representatives.

“Wildlife contest bills stigmatize organized events where people hunt wildlife for recreation,” explained Adkins. “But this legislation is just a first step. How is a coyote contest any different than a fishing derby or a big-buck contest? It's not, and that is how we know where the animal extremists will head next if they push this measure through the Congress.”

Heroes & Villains

WHO WE LIKE AND WHO WE FIGHT IN THE BATTLE FOR YOUTH SPORTSMEN

In a state that seems to want to end hunting every legislative session, and 2022 was no different as multiple anti-hunting bills hit the docket, New Jersey Senator Smith put forward a pro-sportsman bill, albeit not a hunting-related one. Senate Bill 2604 would more than double funding for a program intended to prevent drug use in young people by encouraging them to go fishing. It would increase funding for the state's "Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs" program from \$200,000 to \$450,000. The program, started in 2012, has expanded into 12 cities and would augment state and national efforts to recruit new sportsmen.



HERO: BOB SMITH
New Jersey Senator

VILLAIN: REBECCA BAUER-KAHAN

California Assemblymember



California Assembly Bill 2571, better known as the *Legislation to Regulate Manipulative Gun Advertisements Targeting Children*, introduced by Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan, could become the most damning youth-hunting restriction ever. The broadly written bill could end everything from the sale of Daisy Red Ryder BB guns and youth-model shotguns to youth hunts and even hunter education. AB 2571 casts a wide net over *any* youth program that *promotes* the use of firearms by a member of the "firearms industry." The bill defines "firearm industry" broadly to include organizations formed for the purpose of "... promoting, encouraging, or advocating for the purchase, use, or ownership of firearm-related products." Obviously, this includes nearly all hunting organizations. Each violation is subject to a \$25,000 fine and the bill even allows private citizens to file civil lawsuits to enforce its provisions. 🏹

PROVIDED BY OFFICE OF BOB SMITH (TOP); PROVIDED BY OFFICE OF REBECCA BAUER-KAHAN

TWO STATES AVOID BALLOT-BOX BIOLOGY ...FOR NOW

ACTIVISTS FAIL TO GATHER ENOUGH SIGNATURES TO QUALIFY THREE DIFFERENT INITIATIVES.

Initiatives on both coasts failed to reach minimum signature requirements to qualify for their state ballots this November, to the delight of sportsmen and wildlife lovers.

In the Sunshine State, the “Keep Florida Alive, Sign All Five” campaign, which lumped disparate topics together into a single PR campaign, faced a mixed bag of results. The campaign consisted of five separate constitutional amendments, including a clean-water amendment, protection of “iconic” species, wetland protection, an end to “canned” hunting and, strangely, a toll-road issue. Failing to gather enough signatures for most of the issues, it has now morphed into a clean-water amendment only.

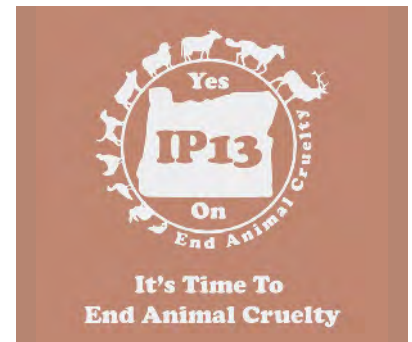
Both amendments pertaining to hunting would have caused issues for sportsmen and wildlife management. The “iconic” species protection would have prohibited hunting for already-protected species such as manatees and dolphins,

but also would have put cougars and black bears on the protected list forever, regardless of population densities and issues. Cougars were recently cited in a study as the main predator of whitetail deer, replacing bobcats and even human hunters. Black bears in parts of the state are in dire need of management as conflicts rise. The amendment to ban hunting of released animals would have decimated quail plantations that supplement wild bird populations with released birds.

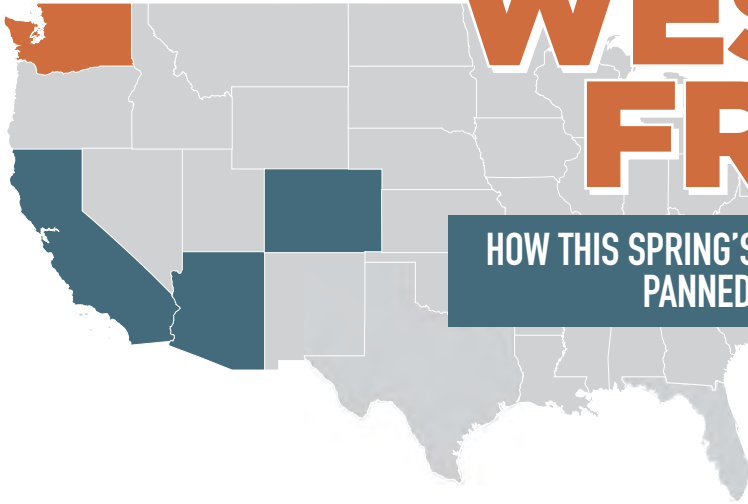
Oregon’s Initiative Petition 13, which would have banned the killing of any animal for any reason other than self-defense, also failed to produce enough signatures to qualify. The crazy initiative concretely stated the ultimate goal of the animal-rights movement, and would have equated humans and animals. Hunting, fishing, trapping, livestock slaughter and breeding all would have been punishable by law. The insanity presented was beyond absurd, but with Portland containing

“Keep Florida Alive, Sign All Five” would have banned bear hunting in the state forever, despite bear population growth. In Oregon, IP13 sought to equate humans with animals.

more than half the state’s population and a strong counterculture ethos, it couldn’t simply be discounted. Luckily, it failed to qualify, but the organizers have already initiated the process to appear on the 2024 ballot. 🏹



PROTECTING THE WESTERN FRONT



HOW THIS SPRING'S PREDATOR MANAGEMENT ATTACKS PANNED OUT ACROSS THE WEST

The Humane Society of the United States, Mountain Lion Foundation, Center for Biological Diversity and other animal-rights organizations initiated a coordinated attack on predator management throughout the West this spring. The assaults were largely rebuked thanks to sportsmen speaking up online, in person and on social media. Here's where things stand and what we can expect. 🐾



COLORADO

Legislation to ban hunting of mountain lions, bobcats and lynx was introduced and assigned to committee. Sportsmen again engaged and a coalition of organizations rallied on the capitol steps, which pushed the committee to vote down the proposed bill.

LOOKING AHEAD: After "Cecil the Lion" was killed in 2015, HSUS once again set its sights on mountain lion hunting when it produced a faux report detailing the deadliest states for the big cats, which was solely based on hunters' harvest statistics. The Sportsmen's Alliance warned then that ballot initiatives were imminent for two of the five states mentioned: Arizona and Colorado. It could soon be Colorado's turn yet again.



ARIZONA

Taking public comment during the approval process of the state's five-year game management plan, Arizona faced an onslaught of anti-hunting comments demanding the end of bear, mountain lion and bobcat hunting. Sportsmen rallied and answered those comments with their own, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department stood with hunter-conservationists.

LOOKING AHEAD: The land of snowbirds and Sun Devils faces a hell of a road in the future. HSUS already tried a ballot initiative to ban "wildcat" hunting, and you can bet they're not giving up on the state, which requires only swaying Phoenix voters.

CALIFORNIA

Taking a different tack, HSUS petitioned the California game commission asking to outright end bear hunting. If there's a state where a simple petition could succeed in ending an entire season with zero science provided, it's California. Thankfully, and somewhat surprisingly, the commission unanimously rejected the idea.

LOOKING AHEAD: Anything goes in the home of Hollywood, so we could again see legislation like last year that bans bear hunting, or HSUS could just decide to bankroll a ballot issue. One thing's for certain: the antis won't give up in California.



WASHINGTON

The political hijinks in the Evergreen State can't be exaggerated. Gov. Jay Inslee has blatantly declared war on hunters by appointing game commissioners who openly admit to being anti-hunting and who brag about having his ear when vetting new appointments to the board. The three newest commissioners voted against the spring bear hunt, killing it for a second, and final, time.



LOOKING AHEAD: With a 5-4 anti-hunting majority on the commission, sportsmen in the state are in trouble. Commissioners are already fighting any discussion of reinstating next year's spring bear hunt while setting course to go after mountain lion hunting and changing the legal mandate of the commission.



BREAKING!

Secretary Haaland Orders Anti-Hunting Payouts Hidden

TRANSPARENCY SCUTTLED AS WEBSITE DETAILING LAWSUIT SETTLEMENTS REMOVED.

As we headed to press, the Sportsmen's Alliance learned that Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland rescinded Secretarial Order 3368. That order, enacted in 2018 by David Bernhardt, Secretary of Interior during the Trump administration, promoted transparency and accountability concerning the department's payouts when settling lawsuits.

In creating the order, Bernhardt cited the need for transparency as the

department had paid \$4.4 billion in lawsuit settlements from January 2012 to 2017. These public funds were department-wide and included everything from the Forest Service to U.S. Fish and Wildlife. The order mandated timelines for publication of payouts and created a website that made it easy for citizens to look up and understand where their tax dollars were being spent.

Secretary Haaland's revocation of the order makes it onerous to find and understand these payouts, especially

with lack of detail and timeliness, effectively allowing the department to hide them from citizens. While a person can still obtain information on taxpayer-funded lawsuit settlements using Freedom of Information requests, the government often takes months to provide requested information, and often charges a fee for doing so. By contrast, the system scuttled by Haaland required full disclosure to the public as soon as a settlement was reached. Now the mechanism provided by the




“THE POTENTIAL FOR BACKROOM DEALS WHERE EXTREME ORGANIZATIONS SUE THE GOVERNMENT TO FORCE RESTRICTIONS ON SPORTSMEN AND -WOMEN AND ARE LATER PAID MILLIONS IN SHADOWY PAYOUTS IS ASTOUNDING.”

—EVAN HEUSINKVELD, PRESIDENT AND CEO, SPORTSMEN’S ALLIANCE

president and CEO of the Sportsmen’s Alliance. “Now that Haaland has made it all the harder to ‘follow the money,’ organizations like the Center for Biological Diversity will use this destructive ‘sue-and-settle’ strategy even more, making anti-hunting organizations rich with taxpayer dollars while the government negotiates away our ability to hunt, fish and trap.”

According to its own 2020 financial disclosures, the Center for Biological Diversity received nearly \$3 million in

“legal returns and settlements” income, which was double the \$1.4 million it received in 2019.

Even the most trustworthy citizen would have to question the timing of Haaland’s actions, which come as U.S. Fish and Wildlife is proposing a rule change for the use of lead ammunition and fishing gear on national wildlife refuges (see page 6)—a key tenet and potential settlement point for the lawsuit brought by the Center for Biological Diversity. 



Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland’s decision to snub accountability for payments in settling lawsuits spells danger for hunters.

government is once again onerous, hard to understand and difficult to navigate for many Americans.

“The potential for backroom deals where extreme organizations sue the government to force restrictions on sportsmen and -women and are later paid millions in shadowy payouts is astounding,” said Evan Heusinkveld,

COURTESY OF DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR



RECRUITING AMERICA'S FINEST

SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE RESEARCH PROFILES ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY MEMBERS SO THE INDUSTRY CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW TO RECRUIT, RETAIN AND REACTIVATE A PROMISING SEGMENT OF SOCIETY.


The Sportsmen's Alliance fights to protect your passions in state legislatures, courtrooms and at the ballot box, but we also conduct research that informs the entire hunting, fishing and shooting industry. Our "Economic Impact of Hunting and Target Shooting" report detailed the economic contributions of sportsmen in every congressional district in the country, while our newest research explores the impediments and proclivities of active-duty military members when it comes to hunting and shooting.

"Hunting and Recreational Shooting Among Active Military Personnel: Implications for Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation" produced data related to servicemembers' views and participation in hunting and shooting, as well as any roadblocks to potential participation.

Approximately 1.4 million people are on active duty in American armed forces, with almost another half million in the National Guard. This substantial segment of the population is trained with firearms, and many active-duty members are already accustomed to the outdoors, which makes them a great target for hunting and shooting recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3). Despite the clear overlap and potential, very little information exists that reveals the attitudes of military members toward hunting and recreational shooting.

Perhaps the first comprehensive study of military personnel related to hunting and shooting R3 efforts, this research project arose from an earlier Sportsmen's Alliance endeavor seeking to identify and eliminate legal and regulatory obstructions to the

recruitment of American military members. When we began that study, we found that there was very little data available for military members related to the sportsmen's lifestyle. For the industry to reach this important segment of the population, we need sound data.

Our newest report surveyed military members across all branches and ranks as to their views and current or potential desires pertaining to hunting and shooting. The full report breaks the responses down across many categories between both hunting and shooting. With sound data, the Sportsmen's Alliance can identify ways to better serve military members legally and legislatively, while the entire industry, including all 50 state wildlife agencies, can provide unique opportunities and focused R3 efforts. 



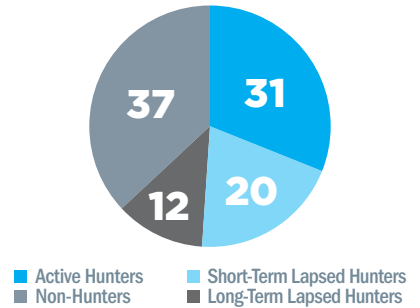
View and download the complete report at sportsmensalliance.org/reports.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT INCLUDE:

- Just less than a third of military personnel (31 percent) are active hunters.
- More than half of military members are active sport shooters, with 58 percent going sport shooting in the past 2 years (using firearms or archery).
- About two-thirds of military personnel show robust interest in hunting with firearms, three-quarters in sport shooting with firearms, and about half show robust interest in bowhunting and target archery shooting. This includes those already doing the activities.
- The types of sport shooting with the greatest interest are plinking with rifles (both non-AR and AR platform rifles) and handguns.
- An audience ripe for R3 efforts are those who expressed interest in the activities but who had not done them in the previous 10 years. In general, Hispanics/Latinos, Blacks/African Americans, National Guard members, and those serving for 10 years or less are the groups have the highest interest but who have not done it.
- Deer are the most popular species among active hunters (91 percent hunt deer), with wild turkey (47 percent) at about half that rate. About a third hunt small game (33 percent) and waterfowl (30 percent), and about a quarter hunt upland game birds (27 percent).
- The top motivations for hunting among active hunters are to be in nature, for sport/recreation, for the challenge, for a mental health break, and for food.
- Lack of time, access and Sunday hunting bans were some of the top constraints to hunting.
- Access and invitations to go hunting, as well as being asked to take a child hunting, are all top encouragements among lapsed hunters.
- The top constraint to hunting participation among non-hunters with robust interest is lack of knowledge/experience and lack of time.
- Camaraderie and the potential to be mentored could play a key part of recruitment among non-hunters.

HUNTING PARTICIPATION

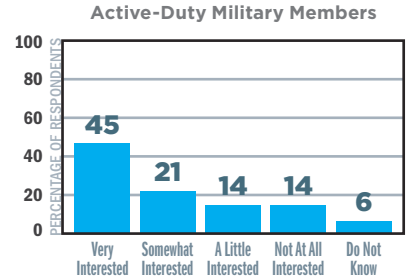
Active-Duty Military Members



The report defines active hunters as those who have hunted with a firearm or bow in the past 2 years; short-term lapsed hunters as those who have hunted in the past 10 years but not in the past 2; long-term lapsed hunters as those who have hunted at some point in their lives but not in the past 10; and non-hunters as those who have never hunted.

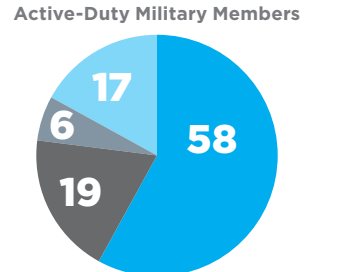
INTEREST IN HUNTING WITH FIREARMS

Active-Duty Military Members



SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION

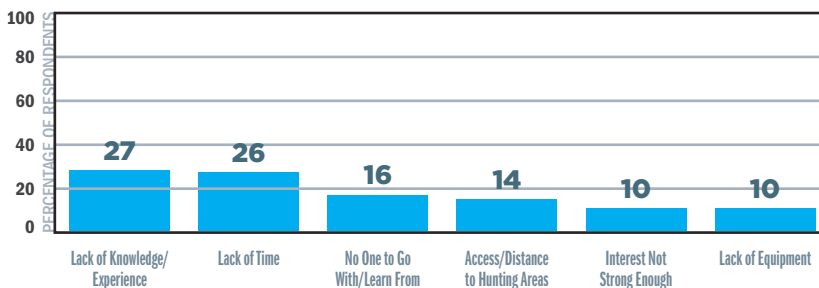
Active-Duty Military Members



The report defines active sport shooters as those who have shot recreationally with a firearm or bow in the past 2 years; short-term lapsed sport shooters as those who have shot in the past 10 years but not in the past 2; long-term lapsed sport shooters as those who have shot at some point in their lives but not in the past 10; and non-sport shooters as those who have never shot recreationally.

TOP REASONS FOR NOT HUNTING

Active-Duty Military Members, Interested Non-Hunters



HOW TO INTELLIGENTLY ARGUE FOR HUNTING



TACTFULLY PRESENT FACTS TO EXPOUND A RATIONAL CASE
FOR OUR SPORT IN THE FACE OF IGNORANCE.

ADOBE STOCK

**THE STATEMENT:**

“WOLVES ARE VALUED MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES AND KEYSTONE SPECIES THAT START A TROPHIC CASCADE DESPERATELY NEED BY OUR DELICATE ECOSYSTEMS.”

WHAT IT DOES:

HUMANIZES WOLVES AND OVEREMPHASIZES THEIR ROLE

THE RESPONSE:

Wolves are amazing animals.^[1] They're nature's perfect predator.^[2] a combination of strength, endurance, speed, intelligence and co-operative hunting. However, while wolves hunt and live in packs, they don't operate as a family like people.^[3] You're conflating human awareness^[4] with how animals understand their environment. Death is a part of nature.^[5] Every animal species is well-equipped to deal with death—that's why wolves have litters with multiple pups.^[6] When one member of a pack is killed, the pack doesn't sit around mourning^[7] and wondering how to go on; it simply continues trying to find food, defending territory, mating and surviving. It is because wolves are so well physically and psychologically adapted to hunt and deal with hardships that their numbers continue to grow,^[8] and the exact reason management and conflict mitigation^[9] with humans is required. While we definitely need to protect our ecosystems,^[10] nature is not so delicate as to fall apart with the absence of just one species. The idea that wolves “changed Yellowstone” through trophic cascade is a myth that's been debunked.^[11] Wolves definitely have had an impact on the ecosystem, but for nearly 100 years the habitat and animals did just fine^[12] without wolves. Nothing in nature is as simple and linear^[13] as is portrayed when it comes trophic cascade and wolves. Denying that is to deny science, history^[14] and the very essence of wolves^[15] themselves.

¹Just say it. It throws environmental extremists off and makes you appear more reasonable, predisposing lurking non-hunters to your points. ²Hard to deny. ³Set the stage for how wolves do operate when it comes to death. ⁴This is called “anthropomorphism”—assigning human qualities and cognition to animals. ⁵A point everyone who wants to “save” wolves forgets to acknowledge. ⁶This biological fact is true for wolves, ungulates, birds, etc. Mortality is high in nature for many reasons, and species have adapted to overcome it. ⁷Highlight the difference between humans and animals stated earlier. ⁸Google: “wolf numbers continue to grow Wisconsin/Minnesota/Michigan” for articles to back up this statement. ⁹Highlight what we're actually asking to have happen. ¹⁰This says “we care about the environment” using language of the anti's. ¹¹Google: “Scientists debunk myth that Yellowstone wolves changed entire ecosystem, flow of rivers by Michael Kuhne” ¹²Hard to deny decades of research taking place and people visiting and seeing a plethora of wildlife. ¹³Undermine the extremists' argument as simpleminded. ¹⁴If they disagree, they're not arguing with you, but scientists and history. ¹⁵Denying all of this doesn't just deny science, but the very “special” animals anti's claim to understand and want to protect.

MAKE YOUR POINT

Having trouble framing an argument related to animal rights, wildlife management or aspects of hunting, fishing and trapping? Email us (info@sportsmensalliance.org) and we'll help you break it down here! 🏹

POLITICAL JOCKEYING



**IN THE FACE OF ECONOMIC WOES, SOCIAL UPHEAVAL AND JUDICIAL TURMOIL,
WHAT DO THE 2022 MIDTERM ELECTIONS MEAN FOR SPORTSMEN?**

By Todd Adkins, Vice President, Government Affairs

ADOBESTOCK



Let's be frank here. Since the 2016 presidential election, anyone who claims to have a firm handle on predicting election results is delusional, dishonest or both. The simple truth is that the American people will continue to surprise the experts and pundits, and I do not expect election 2022 to be any different. Add to that an unsettled economy, high gas prices, an out-of-control housing market, Supreme Court turmoil and war in Eastern Europe, and it is anyone's guess what happens come November.

But having said that, there is one key factor we can lean on as we set expectations for election night 2022.

OUT-PARTY PICKS UP SEATS IN MIDTERM ELECTIONS

One near-universal reality of midterm (non-presidential) elections is that the party holding the presidency will lose seats in the Congress. This is especially true in the U.S. House of Representatives. Even though each election will have specific issues that are important to voters, the out-party, in this case Republicans, has picked up an average of more than two dozen House seats in midterm elections over the modern era of American politics. The only exceptions to this rule are 1998 and 2002.

With a current party split of 220 Democratic seats to 213 Republican seats in the U.S. House, if history stays true, the Republicans will easily take control of the chamber. When we consider the economy, gas prices and inflation, generally, it is hard to see how the historical out-party trend is not repeated in 2022. Retirements in the House also favor a Republican takeover, with 31 Democrats not seeking re-election to only 18 for Republicans. Retirements mean open seats with no incumbency advantage.


While the Senate tends to follow the same out-party rule in general, the party of the president has gained seats or remained even in five midterm elections since 1946. In most years, however, the out-party does very well, with a five-or-more seat pickup common over the same period. The current party split in the Senate is 50-50. As with the House, history suggests Republicans will take control of the chamber. The only variable is the high number of Republicans announcing retirement from office. By midsummer, five Republican Senators had announced their retirement, with three in the highly competitive states of Ohio, North Carolina and Pennsylvania. These open seats may prove crucial to party control of the chamber.

REDISTRICTING

The other major factor leading to a complicated election forecast is nationwide redistricting. After each census, district lines for state and federal offices are redrawn. In some states, this is done by the legislatures, while in others, nonpartisan commissions do the work. In every case, however, we can't be sure of outcomes until after at least one election under the new lines.

Media outlets across the country are predicting the new lines to help one party here, the other party there, and so on, but we really don't know what the impact will be until we see it in action. This is especially true this year because legal challenges to districting maps are being filed all over the nation and many will take months to complete.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Even though the election forecast is at best murky, all of us can do our part to protect and promote our interests going forward. Voting is key to exercising your political voice and standing up for what you believe in. Support the candidates who support you and do your part to protect hunting, fishing and trapping for America's future generations. 

KEY COMMITTEE CHAIR UP FOR GRABS

Republicans could claim House Natural Resources Committee.

Committees do the heavy lifting in Congress, and chairmen hold power when it comes to advancing or killing bills assigned to their committee. A Republican takeover of the House would remove a staunch animal-rights activist from power in the House Natural Resources Committee, which has become a hotbed of anti-hunting activity in recent years.

CURRENT CHAIR: Raul Grijalva (D-AZ)

- Staunchly supports animal-extremist agenda
- Perfect voting record with anti-hunting groups
- Anti-hunting, anti-gun and environmental extremist
- Sponsors bills and holds hearings on hunting bans
- Sponsors bills and holds hearings on trapping bans



CHAIR WITH GOP TAKEOVER: Bruce Westerman (R-AR)

- Proud defender of sportsmen and -women
- Signed Western Caucus letter in support of Sportsmen's Alliance pushback against lead-ammo ban
- Perfect voting record against anti-hunting groups
- Supporter of North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
- Votes pro-gun, pro-hunting and against animal extremists



ADOBE STOCK (MAIN); PROVIDED BY OFFICE OF RAUL GRIJALVA (TOP); PROVIDED BY OFFICE OF BRUCE WESTERMAN (BOTTOM)



X-BOLT SPEED

→ in **OVIX Concealment**

browning.com

CANCEL CULTURE Comes for Hunting

DESPITE SAVING COUNTLESS SPECIES OF ANIMALS, MILLIONS OF ACRES OF HABITAT AND COMPLETE ECOSYSTEMS, HUNTERS FACE HARSH REALITIES FROM VIRTUE-SIGNALING TROLLS ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

By Ron Spomer

It's a mess, make no mistake. Lions, giraffes, bears, coyotes, woodchucks. The ongoing social media uproar incited by hunter-posted images of dead game animals never ends.

Well, it might end with the censorship and banning of such images, possibly the cancellation of any hunter clueless or foolish enough to post an image of little Susie with her first deer or big Uncle Jake with his 100th.

A rational anti-hunter recently posted a reasonable explanation of her dislike of giraffe hero shots and dead lion celebration images. They are ugly to her. They speak of

heartless people celebrating death while hiding behind their contributions to conservation.

To her credit, this writer did recognize and appreciate all the good that modern sport hunting and the North American Model of Wildlife Management programs have done and continue to do for wildlife and wild places. But she warned us latter-day hunter-gatherers that our posting of celebratory images hurts our cause. Gruesome (to some) images drive people to hate hunters and hunting.

They undoubtedly do.



Not only are cancel-culture attacks baseless, but many are also faceless as anti-hunters hide behind social media handles.

Hunters, in response, say they've had enough. Enough of limiting our freedom of expression, our right to hunt legally and ethically and share our joy and successes. Just as our forefathers had done as far back as the painting of the cave walls at Lascaux. Enough of trying to make us feel inferior, evil, heartless or whatever it is you assume we might be. To heck with your bleeding-heart virtue signaling. This is life.

Mind your own business. Everything dies. Get over it.

Except they won't get over it.

No, they'll cry and push and legislate until they shut down hunters and hunting. That's the frightening part.

HUNTERS SAVE WILDLIFE

Without heartless hunters pouring their hearts and dollars into wildlife management programs, all wild plants and animals will lose. We see this in nation after nation that has outlawed regulated sport hunting. With no sport hunters to stand guard, poachers move in. Goats, cattle and woodcutters strip the land. Wildlife is devalued, shot unrestrainedly for meat, poisoned as vermin and soon wiped out. (Never mind that sport hunting is not a frivolous "sport." It's identified as "sport hunting" to differentiate it from market hunting and poaching and because, like all organized sports, it has boundaries and rules, all designed to protect and sustain the hunted as well as the hunters.)

There are good reasons bison and elk and pronghorns and whitetails and turkeys and black bears and cougars and wolves have bounced back from the ragged edge of extinction to become common to abundant to pest-like (seen any Canada geese lately?). It's because sport hunters made it happen. Sport hunters rallied against market hunting. Sport hunters initiated closed seasons, bag limits, licenses and tags. Sport hunters pushed for excise taxes on their guns and ammunition. Sport hunters demanded and paid for game wardens, disease research, habitat restoration, transplants and re-introductions.

While non-hunters and anti-hunters enjoyed their tea and dreamed of bluebirds dancing with foxes, hunters were slinging mud, digging dirt, planting trees. Hunters were rebuilding wetlands, buying grasslands, capturing and releasing sheep and elk and grouse and ferrets. Sport hunters were hiring biologists and game wardens and lobbying Congress and raising hundreds of millions of dollars annually to protect, restore and replenish the wilds.

I'm sorry if that doesn't tug at your heartstrings and bring a tear to your eye, but the millions of animals produced and saved by hunters' conservation efforts far, far outstrips the number eaten by them. The number of lions saved from poachers' snares and poisons by the professional hunters who patrol the gritty backlands of Africa considerably surpasses the handful of senescent old males shot by sport hunters each year. Call it blood money, but blood money—paid generously by legal hunters—funds the habitat and protection of these animals and ecosystems. Trophy hunters' dollars ensure not only a sustainable population of lions, but vultures and sable and duikers and kudu and dik-dik and elephants and lilac-breasted rollers.

Hunters want and need wild lands and wild habitats and are willing to pay for them. Drive those hunters out and farmers, cattlemen, lumbermen and poachers move in. Within a few years the wild is gone. The wildlife is gone.

But anti-hunters back in the city are happy. Ignorant, but happy.

The simple reality is that nature is right. She/he/it/God established a biotic community on this planet that has for millions of years been swimming in blood and gore and fecundity. Every living thing stays that way by feeding on

death. To nature, death is indivisible from life, one and the same. The carnivores—from wolves and lions to minks and falcons to robins and humans—are as natural and necessary as any herbivores. A gentle, brown-eyed doe is no more beautiful and innocent than any cold-eyed rattlesnake. A diving, ripping, biting eagle is no more noble and majestic than a tip-toeing San bushman with a bow and arrow. A leaping, chasing, snapping pack of wild dogs that eats a zebra alive is no more kind and righteous than a cigar-smoking, gold-chain-wearing, high-powered-rifle-toting multimillionaire blasting .33-caliber holes through a moose.

It makes no sense to despise the human hunter more than the canine hunter. Or the feline hunter. Or the falcon hunter. Except ...

Humans know. We know we have the power to wipe out virtually any species. We understand the ramifications of our actions. So, we modify and temper them. Of all nature's carnivores, we alone limit our killing for the benefit of our prey. The golden eagle we imagine to be magnificent and noble would kill and eat the last endangered black-footed ferret on earth and neither know nor care a whit. In some California mountain ranges cougars have been documented killing every

last bighorn sheep. They have yet to offer restitution. Cougars have not proposed closing their sheep season. They have not captured and reintroduced brood stock into the depleted ranges. Neither has any wolf been known to forego killing nursing female caribou or snapping up their newborn calves. No wolf pack has agreed to postpone killing moose until they've matured, reproduced and grown antlers spanning a minimum of 50 inches. No crows or magpies ever observe a closed season on duck eggs.

Despite all the anti-hunter complaints about selfish, greedy, cruel, murderous human hunters, we two-legged predators remain the only animal that has ever exhibited compassion, restraint, kindness, sharing and altruism.

PICTURES DON'T TELL THE WHOLE STORY

Alas, none of that is depicted in a photo of a beaming hunter behind a dead ram. No anti-hunter and darn few non-hunters see justifiable pride in the accomplishment. None see happiness in the hunter-gatherer having procured a winter's supply of free-range, all-organic, cruelty-free meat (no confinement, no inoculations, no castration, branding, ear tagging, forced weaning, shipping, slaughterhouse). They can't imagine the

HOW TO TAKE TASTEFUL PHOTOS

Show the best side of the animal and the hunt.

A picture might have been worth a thousand words in 1913 when the term was coined, and when newspapers and museums were the vehicles of mass communication. Today, however, a picture can be worth millions of comments while reaching hundreds of millions of people worldwide on social media. To post better photos, keep the following in mind.

Clean the Animal

Wipe excess blood, dirt and debris from the bullet entry or exit point, mouth and elsewhere. Push the tongue back into the mouth or cut it out.

Pose Respectfully

Respectful might be tough to define, but it's easy to spot disrespect, especially for non-hunters. Pictures don't have to be somber—successful hunts are definite reasons for smiling—but thoughtful poses and appropriate reactions are necessary.

Be Aware of the Background

Dirty tailgates and garages don't portray the best images on social media. Neither do beer cans. Instead, show the habitat where the animal was killed.

Tell a Story

Relay to your audience, which could be the entire world if your post goes viral, the challenge of the hunt, the hours of hard work, the disappointment of missed opportunities, the satisfaction and ethics of procuring your own meat, and the facts pertaining to the hunter-conservation relationship. —*Brian Lynn*



ADAM HEGGENSTALLER (2)



hunter might be honoring his quarry by displaying its magnificence, its pelt, body, antlers or horns that might otherwise go unseen and unacknowledged. Ashes to ashes.

But this disgusting trophy fetish, this lust for antlers? Surely that is wrong! Isn't the piggish hunter merely chest-beating for having vanquished the mighty jabberwocky? Perhaps. But, so what? The animal is still dead, still meat, still appreciated, eaten and celebrated. So what if the antlers or horns are hung in a place of honor and admired? They were admired and appreciated by the animal itself. Bucks and bulls parade and display these secondary sexual characteristics to show off, to intimidate rivals, to impress females. Cows and does notice big antlers and horns; they'll reject a male of lesser stature to mate with the one sporting the largest horns. Seems rather silly of us to trivialize or denigrate what the animals themselves value.

Ah, but all of this requires thought, analysis, honesty and tolerance, none of which are currently in vogue. No, ours is a culture of condemnation and virtue-signaling. Those who can't stay atop the moral high horse can at least jump on the bandwagon it's pulling and contribute to the cacophony.

The solution to social media posting of hunter success, then, is a poor one at best. Stop. Sure, it's unfair. While gardeners can grin behind a basket of giant carrots, marathoners dangle their gold medals, 4-H kids display their blue-ribbon cattle, hunters must hide their accomplishments. To be sure, we are

For non-hunters, trophy shots don't speak to conservation unless the post highlights wildlife management over antler size.

free to display dead-animal photos, but each one potentially drives another nail into the coffin. A few more Cecil the Lion incidents, a couple more dead giraffes, and hunting images could be banned from social media. Worse, hunters and hunting could be banned, period. Outlawed. Voted out of existence. Like mountain lion hunting in California, grizzly hunting in British Columbia ... and then not only would millions of hunters suffer, but wildlife and wild places would be left undefended, unwatched, unappreciated, vulnerable. And soon gone.

Does this mean one can never post a "trophy" photo? No. I think tastefully posed scenes of hunters with prey can be shared. The trick is capturing the episode with honor and respect. De-emphasize the ego. Focus on the animal and habitat. Add comments about the joy of being an active participant in nature's cycle of life, of gathering all-organic, free-range food. Mention connections with tradition, family and friends. Forego the collections of corpses lined up on tailgates or piled on garage floors. We don't hunt for the thrill of stalking through our garages or driving the roads. Let's show ourselves, family, friends and game in the settings that draw us to hunt: the beautiful, stimulating, restorative wilds we need, celebrate, fund, restore and defend. 🏹

CANCELING Cancel Culture

BY ENGAGING IN THOUGHTFUL
DIALOGUE, WE CAN APPEAL TO
NON-HUNTERS AND UNDERMINE
THE VIRTUE-SIGNALING MOB THAT
CONTINUES TO HUNT SPORTSMEN.

By Todd Adkins,
Vice President, Government Affairs



Each of us plays a critical role in protecting the future of hunting, fishing and trapping in America. While this has always been the case, it is especially true today because of how connected our society has become. In times past, we might pass around a photo of a big buck to family and friends directly, but today we are more likely to share that same photo with an extended online community. And this is where social media can have long-range community-level consequences—both good and bad—for all of us.

Enter “cancel culture.”

The phenomenon of cancel culture has been around for years but is becoming more pronounced as social media platforms continue to grow in popularity, influence media coverage and impact our daily lives. At its core, what I am describing is when social media is weaponized to attack individuals because

of who they are, what they have done or, most often, what they believe in. Instead of merely disagreeing, however, those who embrace cancel culture attacks try to destroy a person and his or her standing in society. Such attacks attempt to “cancel” the target, quite literally.

If this toxic online bullying were kept at the individual level, then each of us could make our own decision on whether to participate. Unfortunately, the reach of social media is vast and because of this, these attacks can be seen by subscribers numbering in the hundreds of millions. Hundreds of millions who are unlikely to understand the finer details of effective fish and wildlife management or the billions of dollars sportsmen and -women have contributed to conservation over the decades. In short, your average social media user does not have the information necessary to make an educated decision one way or the other on our issues.

As hunting, trapping and fishing are what we are all trying to protect, we can never forget this simple reality: most Americans know little, if anything, about our cherished traditions. When people lack information to form a logical or reasoned opinion, they often fall back on emotion.

Social media amps up this reality by fostering emotional responses, putting cancel culture on steroids, resulting in one attack after another against hunters, anglers and trappers. These events then become part of a narrative that people use to develop their own opinions on issues. The public's opinion, overall, is changed over time by each of these individual experiences.

The unfortunate truth is that anti-hunting zealots roam the internet waiting for the opportunity to strike. All of us can recall instances when people have endured vicious online attacks after posting a picture or two of a successful hunt or while at the gun range. It does not take long—often just minutes—for the online assault to begin.

Here at the Sportsmen's Alliance, we have defended individuals against such attacks more than a few times, but each of us likely knows someone who has been victimized in this way. In fact, these attacks are becoming more widespread.

The answer to all this noise lies within all of us and is simple: be thoughtful.

Photos with thoughtful posts that explain the benefits of hunting for both humans and wildlife are much more effective at promoting our sport than engaging in emotional arguments with activists.

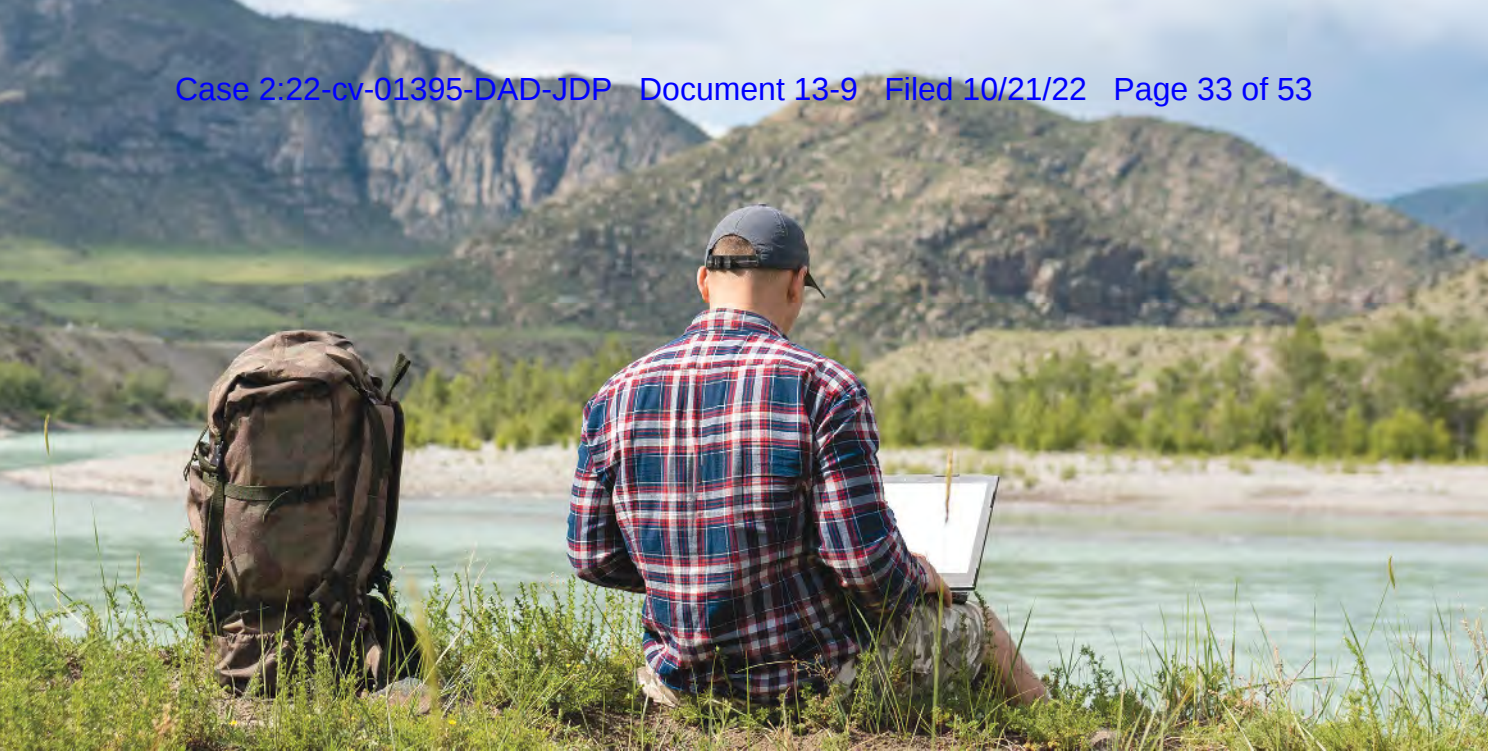
Social media is nothing more than an extended public square, where each of us interacts with others in both positive and negative ways. Each of us has the power to change individual opinion when we engage, either positively or negatively.

If each of us takes every opportunity to inform average Americans of our story in a very thoughtful way, we can have a profound impact on public opinion going forward. In other words, we hold the power to influence collective public opinion, and this is how we protect the future of hunting, fishing and trapping in America. Be thoughtful and cancel "cancel culture."

In simple terms, being thoughtful means thinking before acting, especially on social media or while in public. You might carefully review something you are about to post, or a comment you are ready to send, and remember that there will be non-hunters viewing or reading your materials. Ask yourself what those who do not know much about hunting, fishing and trapping will take away from your communication. The same is true any time you engage with legislators or post comments in the regulatory space.

In all cases, keep in mind the vast unknowing masses in America who do not have a strong opinion on hunting, trapping or fishing, but will ultimately make decisions about our future. Being thoughtful means acknowledging that our actions have consequences beyond the individuals we deal with directly because everything we do will affect public opinion. This is important because even though public opinion is not expressly responsible for passing laws and regulations, being





Many Americans enjoy the outdoors but have little knowledge of hunting and its role in conservation. Social media presents a platform to educate these folks with factual information about successful wildlife management via hunters.

“out of step” with public opinion is not a long-range plan for success.

Some might ask how to be thoughtful when faced with a toxic personal attack on social media. The natural response may be to fight fire with fire and push back with equal toxicity. While this can be satisfying, the opportunity to educate those watching is lost. It might be old-fashioned to say, “take the high road,” but for those in the crowd watching the fight, logic and reason will help steer them back to our side. And we must drive that logic and reason home, over and over if necessary. Knowledge is power. In the case of cancel culture advocates, knowledge is the one true antidote to their craven brand of toxicity.

The ways we can all be more thoughtful when out in public are many. You might develop a habit when communicating online or in person that every time you post or speak about hunting, you include an important fact about our community that average Americans do not know. For example, the amount of money hunters have contributed within your state and nationally to both conservation and the economy is a story that too few Americans know enough about. Information about our public treasures like national parks and national wildlife refuges that were started by Theodore Roosevelt, the hunting president, is another possibility. Or gather similar facts from your state about public lands and how critical sportsmen and -women are to fish and wildlife conservation. Get creative; we can win this fight!

We have a powerful story to tell about our nation’s healthy and abundant wildlife populations. From sea to shining sea, the history of American conservation is a remarkable one that is the benchmark for the entire world. It is sportsmen and -women that have been, and will remain, the financial

backbone of this success. Does your average American know this? Not really. When the unknowing are pulled into a viral fight on social media after a young woman posts a photo with a trophy deer, how can we expect them to respond?

Whitetail deer, Canada geese, wild turkeys and many other success stories are just waiting to be told from this perspective. If we agree—as hunters, trappers and anglers—to take every opportunity to tell these stories to every individual we come across, we start the next conversation in a much more positive place. Anyone trying to cancel us better pack a lunch because they will have a steep hill to climb.

The pictures you choose to share online can have a profound impact on public opinion and cancel culture toxicity. The strength of emotions over logic becomes even more pronounced with visual material. Visuals connect with the emotional part of our brain while text connects with the logical part. Therefore, images can powerfully move our opinion and generate emotional responses entirely devoid of logic or reason. This is even true when imagery depicts something known to be false. Many of the most extreme cases of cancel culture attacks are in response to photos posted online, but such campaigns can stretch beyond social media once started. If we take care and recognize that non-hunters will potentially view the photos we post, then we can proactively post photos which will have a positive impact instead of a negative one.

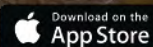
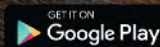
To be clear, I am not suggesting that any of us not stand proudly, even defiantly, in defense of our outdoor heritage. Being thoughtful does not require anyone to slink off into a dark corner. Quite to the contrary, I am arguing that all of us take full advantage of every opportunity to proudly tell our story. Being thoughtful simply requires a recognition that we should be telling our story with care while avoiding the toxicity showed by the cancel culture advocates. The great news is, this approach does not change how we live or whether we interact with others online; it only requires us to take each interaction as a fantastic opportunity to protect and promote our community long-term. 🏹

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The Importance of PUBLIC OPINION

THE HEAD OF OUR GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, TODD ADKINS, ANSWERS QUESTIONS CONCERNING AMERICANS' ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING, THE MECHANISMS OF GOVERNMENT AND PROTECTING OUR PASSIONS.

By Brian Lynn

SPORTSMEN'S ADVOCATE: In your feature article on "cancel culture," (page 28) you spend a lot of time discussing how important American public opinion is when we think about the future. Could you explain a bit more about how that works?

Todd Adkins: This is a critical issue that is often overlooked. While it is true that we do not live in a direct democracy, there is a clear connection between what the people "want" and what government does.

In our republic, our elected officials do our bidding in government, or at least are expected to function as our delegates, and this is where elections serve as a regular check on whether officials carry through and do what we want. But there is always a time lag there.

SA: Many claim the system is corrupt and officials only do what the rich and powerful want. Are you saying that majority opinion actually rules in America?

TA: Yes, but not in the way most people think. You cannot take a poll today and expect the Congress or the president to act tomorrow on the "results" of that poll. Our founders did not want a system that is "on" or "off" like that. That leads to tyranny of the majority, and James Madison and others put barriers in our Constitution so that will not happen or is minimized.

On the other hand, once public opinion becomes clearly in favor of one policy or another, our three branches of government do respond, but over time, not immediately. This lag between opinion and government action is a good thing, not a bad one and is how our system is designed.



SA: But isn't it true that most people have already made up their minds to support or oppose us?

TA: Yes, there are groups of Americans with very firmly held beliefs on many topics, but that does not mean we are completely immune to new information. Individual attitudes work like this: we each have a cabinet full of information that builds over time with files on just about everything under the sun. When we are exposed to new things, that new information, whether words, phrases, images, memes, arguments, whatever it is, gets placed in our cabinet within the file we've built on that issue or topic. It is as if we keep adding to the file over our lifetime.

Well, coming full circle then, this is why we each have so many opportunities to "add our two cents" to everyone's file about hunting, fishing, and trapping. Does that mean we immediately convert someone to our side? Of course not, but we have done our part, even in a small way, to educate that person with new information that will be used as they continually update their file—or attitude—about us and what we do.

SA: What about the power of words and knowledge, you talk about that in your feature, but can you expand that a bit. Do words really matter that much?

TA: The power of messaging and words on public opinion is undeniable. We must acknowledge this and understand how impactful our actions and language can be, and, more importantly, how they help or hinder our efforts to protect hunting, fishing and trapping.

I will give you one recent example from current debate here in America. I am not sure when we made this transition, but

Vice President of Government Affairs Todd Adkins is an avid waterfowler who encourages hunters to be thoughtful on social media.



SA: So how does this fit in with your suggestion that members of our community be thoughtful when on social media or in public presenting the case for our outdoor heritage?

TA: Two things guide my thinking here. One, today's public square is vast and there are microphones and cameras everywhere. Two, our long-term success depends on whether a majority of the public continues to support the American hunter, trapper and angler. For me, being thoughtful means always having the awareness of these two basic things. If I remember that everything I say or do in the public's eye will influence public opinion long-term, then I will take every opportunity to educate folks and not engage in a toxic argument with an anti who I am never going to convince anyway. We have some fantastic stories to tell and should spend our time and energy as ambassadors with a positive message. Long-term public opinion is our goal.

ADOBE STOCK (ABOVE); COURTESY OF TODD ADKINS (RIGHT)



have you noticed that guns are now routinely called “weapons” even by folks in our community? I do not know about you, but I have never called one of my personal firearms a weapon. It would even be comical for me to ask friends if they brought their “weapon” on a weekend visit to a sporting clays course or to a duck blind. And yet, I hear the term often when policy debates spring up in today’s public square. As you know, we have been fighting the use of “assault weapon” to mischaracterize semi-automatic rifles for several decades, but I’ve noted a recent shift among too many sportsmen and -women that “weapon” now applies to any firearm. That is a gift that keeps giving for the antis. We must take that hill back and it starts in our community.

SA: Where is public opinion today on issues related to hunting, fishing, and trapping?

TA: I want to personally thank the hard work of the team of survey specialists at Responsive Management (RM) who regularly survey Americans to provide excellent data on public attitudes regarding hunting, fishing and trapping. The great news is that a majority of the American public continues to

According to data collected by Responsive Management, 84 percent of Americans approve of hunting for meat.

support legal and regulated hunting, fishing and trapping. But as the RM surveys illustrate, this support can falter depending on the issue.

In particular, the public’s support greatly depends on the reason I am hunting, fishing or trapping. If for food, a clear supermajority of the public supports me, but if the reason is to gather a trophy, the vast majority of Americans oppose. Americans also support the concept of wildlife management as well, so if I hunt or trap to help manage wildlife, Americans support, but if I am doing so only for “sport” or recreation, that support is greatly diminished. Turning back to our discussion about being thoughtful, these data points show how important it is for all of us to center our words, messages and social media arguments around the parts of our story that resonate clearly and positively with average Americans. I strongly encourage every Sportsmen’s Alliance member to seek out these RM surveys, available online, and get to know public opinion on our issues. 🏹

To read the Responsive Management study, “Americans’ Attitudes Toward Hunting, Fishing, Sport Shooting, and Trapping,” visit fishwildlife.org/afwa-informs/research.

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Lauren Vransy, Wisconsin

THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE CAUGHT UP WITH LAUREN VRANSY ABOUT HOW HER JOURNEY TO BECOMING A HOUNSWOMAN ALL STARTED IN A BIG CITY WITH ONE BLUETICK.



I grew up in a suburb of Milwaukee that was a very ‘keeping up with the Joneses,’ soccer mom, manicured lawn type of place. I was always into nature—I was called “Nature Girl”—and collected bird nests, bones and leaves, which I’d bring to show-and-tell. I came from a non-hunting family, but not anti-hunting. My grandpa taught me how to shoot when I was 15.

After college, I purchased my first home in Milwaukee proper and thought I needed to buy my first gun. Next, I wanted a dog. I had a beagle mix as a kid and maybe that was a catalyst to this whole thing. She’d get loose in the neighborhood and chase rabbits and bring them home to us ... dead. Perhaps even back then hunting with dogs piqued my interest.

It took me about a year to find a blue-tick coonhound named Maggie, a rescue from the local pound. I took Maggie to the dog park, and she would tree squirrels. There was a huge, old oak tree in my yard with a raccoon family around. It was fun

to watch Maggie sniff and tree. I didn’t get any complaints, but I’m pretty sure I was known as the “Crazy Coonhound Lady” by the neighbors.

I had an idea what coonhounds were used for, but never really knew how they were used. One night, I went down a rabbit hole on YouTube watching water races, field trials, people taking their dogs out at night coon hunting. I thought to myself: *One, this is really cool. And two, Maggie can do this.*

I looked online trying to find a club that I could take her to because I didn’t know anybody. This is a lifestyle that’s so underground and just not well-known. Finally, I found a club about an hour away, but they were hesitant to give me information or allow me to come thinking that I was an anti-hunter from the city. Once I finally convinced them—a year later—I took Maggie out, and she was a natural. I met some of my now good friends and mentors who started me on the path to what is my entire life.

Later, I moved out of the city to an old farmhouse on 80 acres. At that point I had two dogs; Piper, who is still my best dog, was one of them. I ended up getting two puppies a week later. It escalated quickly; I now have six and will be adding more soon.

There’s just not a lot of us houndswomen. It’s rare to have a woman that gets into it all



on her own (no boyfriend, family or friends to spark interest), but I’ve met a few. A young hunter named Andrea came to a learn-to-hunt-raccoon program I mentored and was hooked on the first night. We hunted a lot together with Piper before she got her own treeing Walker coonhound. We have a bond, and it’s just nice to have a community inside the community that already exists.

I travel across the country with my hounds. We just be-bop around the country from the Midwest to Colorado in an 11-foot camper. Last winter, we spent two and a half months in New Mexico. It’s a lifestyle. It’s a heritage. It’s my passion. It consumes my life, my thoughts, time and finances. It’s 365 days a year and 24/7. I help run the “Houndsman XP Podcast” that aims to preserve, promote and protect the lifestyle. It’s important to have the right people as spokespeople because our passion is getting squashed by the anti-hunting community for no other reason than emotion. But it’s emotional for me, too. I’m emotional about my dogs. I love my dogs. If something happened to them or we couldn’t hunt together, it would be devastating.

What I appreciate about Sportsmen’s Alliance is that it supports houndsmen directly and publicly. Not all hunting organizations do that, or they do only when it benefits them. One issue comes along and it’s a brief story. Where’s the support the rest of the time? 🏹

You can follow Lauren’s travel and adventures in hound hunting on Instagram at @brew_city_blue_hounds.



COURTESY OF LAUREN VRANY (3)

MEMBER PHOTOS

FELLOW HUNTERVATIONISTS SHARE THEIR SUCCESS.

MATT A.: “Parker, 9, and Aubrey, 12, ran a great trapline with me. Aubrey came along almost every day this season. We caught 12 more beavers after this photo. Aubrey was nominated as one of the Pennsylvania Trappers Association’s Youth Trappers of the Year.”



KATIE B.: “Hard work gives you the opportunity; dedication gives you the success. This season was challenging, but nothing short of amazing. I’m always thankful to be able to do what I love.”



ZACH D.: “Proud dad day for sure. I’ve waited for this moment since I heard her first cry. Zayden bought her first license today, set out and harvested her first animal. Hunting adventures just took on a different meaning. I’m so proud of her and can’t wait for more.”



EMMA D.: “Eight years of trying to get a bird, and I got it done this morning! 2-inch spurs, 11.25-inch beard, 23.74 pounds! Potential Minnesota state record!”



MELISSA B.: “Best day ever. Jax shot a big old tom! He’s a turkey-hunting, grape-pop-drinking, car-seat-riding kid! Living his best life at 3 years old!”



JIM W.: “My girls seeing their Euro mounts for the first time and for their first deer!”

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Why I'm a Member of **SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE**



**MELISSA BACHMAN, HOST OF WINCHESTER DEADLY PASSION,
PROUDLY PROMOTES HUNTING AND THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE.**

Ever since I was a little girl growing up in central Minnesota, hunting was a part of my family and, ultimately, became a part of who I am. My parents taught my brother and I about conservation by trapping pocket gophers, planting trees, adding ponds and improving the property we lived on for all animals. On the weekends we hunted together on public land for ducks and deer, spent countless hours hunting pheasants right

around our home and then learned to clean and cook the animals we harvested. Even before we were old enough to hunt, we took part in the process and longed for the day we could participate. These are the memories that will never be forgotten and there were countless lessons learned in the field. I believe having a childhood growing up in the great outdoors and having these experiences helped mold me into the person I am today.

I took that passion for hunting and the outdoors and made a career out of it. I set my mind to finding a way to hunt nearly every single day and made that a reality. Now my goal is getting new people involved, especially families. I truly believe the bond created outdoors is something very special. You're doing something everybody is enjoying at the same time, and that's hard to come by in this digital world. Although I took it for granted that every family enjoyed

COURTESY OF MELISSA BACHMAN (2)

these same opportunities, I now know this is simply not true. This lifestyle is so amazing and fulfilling, yet constantly under attack. That's where Sportsmen's Alliance comes in. I now realize the need to protect and promote our outdoor heritage. As sportsmen, so many of us are busy living our day-to-day lives, hunting and enjoying the outdoors on the weekends, that we don't realize all the battles fought on our behalf every single day.

There are so many organizations out there that look out for a specific species—Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, National Deer Association, Mule Deer Foundation—all amazing organizations. But, the Sportsmen's Alliance constantly looks out for us hunters. They have a government affairs team that includes experienced lobbyists, lawyers and campaign specialists who are on the front lines protecting what we all love.

As sportsmen, so many of us are busy living our day-to-day lives, hunting and enjoying the outdoors on the weekends, that we don't realize all the battles fought on our behalf every single day.

Sportsmen's Alliance does an incredible job of keeping hunters updated on the things that matter. For example, they recently have been fighting on our behalf regarding a privacy loophole

in Minnesota where hunters' information is being demanded by the anti-hunting community. Unfortunately, these hunters have been getting harassed and it was the government pushing them to release their private information. As a Minnesota native, I know all too well about the nasty emails, texts and phone calls from extremists that do not understand our lifestyle. I can deal with it, but your average hunters and their families should never have to experience this kind of stuff. Again, Sportsmen's

Alliance was right there letting people know how they can help, reaching out to lawmakers and making a difference.

I've been a member for as long as I can remember, and it's not just because they fight for our rights, but they are constantly trying to keep our passion alive through youth programs and advocacy. For example, the Trailblazer Adventure program introduced almost 2 million families to the outdoors since 2001. Their Families Afield project, which you might know by apprentice or mentored hunting licenses, has made it easier for parents to get their children started in hunting—and not just children, but adults, too. Now their Conservation Science curriculum has given nearly 2,000 high school kids a hands-on education in wildlife management in just its first year!

My love for hunting will never change, but the mission of my show has definitely shifted to get more people involved and showcase the fun of the outdoors and all the benefits it can bring to a family. This is exactly the same mission the Sportsmen's Alliance believes in, and I am a proud member. Anything we can do as hunters to ensure our outdoor heritage is protected for generations to come is worth the battle, and Sportsmen's Alliance is right there on the front lines for us all. 🏹



A Quarter Century of HELPING SPORTSMEN

THE 25TH ANNUAL NORTHEAST SPORTING CLAYS CHAMPIONSHIP BENEFITS THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE MISSION.

A great time was had by all at the 25th Annual Northeast Sporting Clays Championship in New Paltz, N.Y.! Celebrating its silver anniversary, this event has had an impact on the outdoor community with multiple locations, sponsors and participating organizations. The Sportsmen's Alliance has been the beneficiary of the shoot for several years now. The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) has been the title sponsor for more than five years, and donated a generous cash pledge of \$10,000, apparel and other giveaways this year.

For the first time, this year's event was a registered shoot with 87 participants. The excitement was such that we had 26 shooters register before we even had a chance to send out our first

announcement email! We welcomed many returning shooters from previous years and were happy to see those familiar smiling faces. There were a few youth shooters under 18 on the course, and we had more women shooters than any previous year. The winner of the High Male award, George Federoff, shot a 97 just two months shy of his 80th birthday. Our Manager of Field Operations, Craig Henderson, describes him as "very spry," and "to look out for him again next year!"

The event has been held at Mid-Hudson Sporting Clays in New Paltz for the past five years. Nestled in tranquil upstate New York, the facility offers everything a shooter could dream of and presents a beautiful yet challenging course with ample wildlife. Shooters moved between 17 stands to shoot 100

targets. After shooting the course, participants enjoyed a delicious barbecue lunch of pulled pork, brisket and more.

We want to thank all of our event sponsors for their generous contributions, including the NSSF for their title sponsorship and our host, Mid-Hudson Sporting Clays, who also donated an Aselkon shotgun to our raffle. SIG Sauer and Colt were among sponsors who donated firearms. Our attendees enjoyed the raffles and giveaways after lunch with six firearms given away and a small gear collection as well.

The Northeast Sporting Clays Championship grossed \$25,300 including gifts in kind. The Sportsmen's Alliance and our Foundation will use these funds to protect hunting, fishing, trapping and our shooting-sports heritage for generations to come. 🏹


Weatherby Foundation board members Alan Sackman, Barbara Sackman (also a Sportsmen's Alliance board member) and Alexander Egorov, the 2021 Weatherby Award Winner, champion conservation.

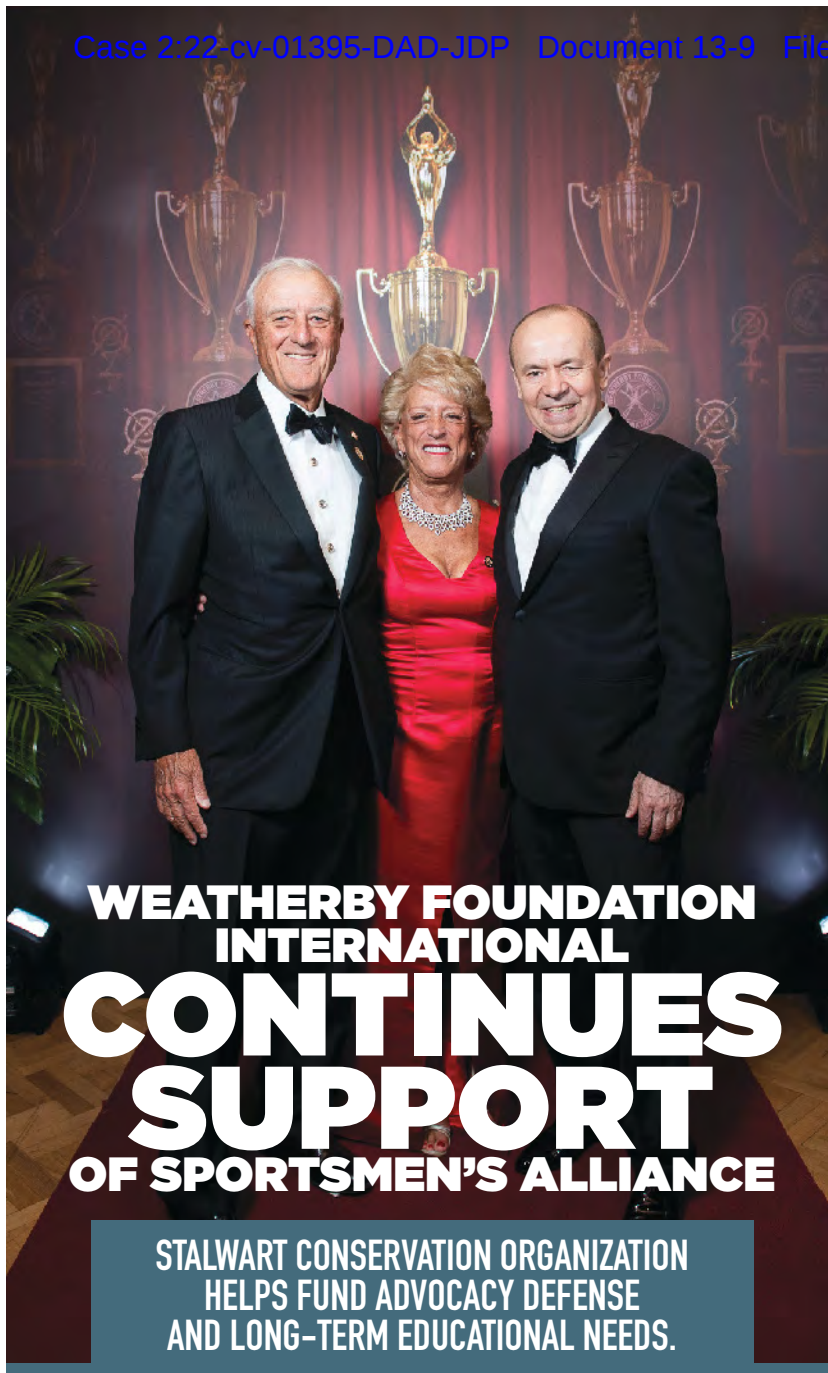
organizations that develop and support hands-on educational activities. It is one of the few non-profit organizations to focus its efforts and financial support on education outside of the industry.

"The Weatherby Foundation is very proud to be a long-time supporter of the fantastic work done by Sportsmen's Alliance in their strong advocacy for hunting, conservation and enlightened education," said Peter A. Larsen, M.D., board president of Weatherby Foundation International.

The Weatherby Foundation has partnered with and supported the Sportsmen's Alliance for many years. Whether in the legislative or legal arena, advocacy takes financial support to pay lawyers and lobbyists. Without that support, our ability to hunt suffers under draconian laws and legal rulings.

However, the way to win, once and for all, against the anti-hunting establishment is education. The impact of sportsmen on wildlife conservation cannot be overstated. To stem the decline in hunting and other consumptive activities, the entire sector must expand the boundaries of its efforts and look at nontraditional recruitment vehicles. Many in the current generation are unaware of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. We must engage future generations, providing critical education about effective wildlife conservation and the vital link sportsmen play. To accomplish this, the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation has launched Conservation Adventures to bring a conservation-based education curriculum directly to American youth.

"We're incredibly blessed to have the support of the Weatherby Foundation International," said Sportsmen's Alliance President and CEO Evan Heusinkveld. "The Weatherby Foundation is home to many of the most dedicated individuals in the hunting and conservation community, all of whom understand the immediate importance of protecting hunting and wildlife conservation. Their efforts have made a direct and meaningful impact on countless organizations, including the Sportsmen's Alliance." 



WEATHERBY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL CONTINUES SUPPORT OF SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

STALWART CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION HELPS FUND ADVOCACY DEFENSE AND LONG-TERM EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

The Sportsmen's Alliance is truly a nationwide alliance of hunters, anglers and trappers. We protect those interests that fund the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, and we work with nearly every conservation and advocacy organization that aligns with protecting those interests.

Weatherby Foundation International is one such organization. Hunting and shooting enthusiasts around the world remember Roy E. Weatherby for his ammunition and firearms innovations.

Many also remember him for his steadfast support of wildlife conservation and ethical sport hunting. Today, the Weatherby Foundation helps preserve these memories and continue the man's work on behalf of all hunters.

Formed in 1988, the foundation's mission statement is "to educate youth and the non-hunting public on the beneficial role of ethical sport hunting and its contribution to wildlife conservation, and to protect our constitutional right to do so." Each year the foundation continues to grow its relationship with a variety of



One Mission, Two Organizations, MANY PROGRAMS

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE FOR BOTH THE ALLIANCE AND FOUNDATION.

By Aaron Carmichael, Vice President, Development

If you're reading this article then you are one of the reasons the Sportsmen's Alliance and its sister organization, the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation, exist. Regardless if you're a member and this magazine is one of the perks of your membership, a major donor giving to specific mission need, a private foundation that is helping underwrite key educational initiatives, a corporate partner funding the fight across all 50 states, a state agency that is partnering in wildlife conservation, a regular donor that ensures ongoing funding is ready for the battle, an estate donor that is funding the future fights we don't even know about yet, or one of countless other supporters of the Sportsmen's Alliance and its Foundation, you make our organization possible.

You may have wondered what the difference is between the Sportsmen's Alliance and the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation. Besides two separate IRS designations, the separate organizations

serve different purposes while working to accomplish the same mission: Protecting your ability to hunt, fish and trap, and ensuring the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation lives on in perpetuity.

Gifts to the Alliance through an individual or club membership, or corporate partnership, go directly to the advocacy fight as we work in state and federal legislatures to push back against bills that would limit hunting, fishing and trapping. These funds are also used to push back against dangerous ballot issues and ensure the public is fully aware of the true impact of these initiatives before going to the ballot box. Advocacy is in our DNA and the Alliance allows us to tirelessly fight for you no matter where that fight needs to take place. Donations to the Alliance generally aren't tax deductible.

Gifts to the Foundation support three critical functions. First, Foundation gifts ensure our expert legal team can fight lawsuits and court rulings on your behalf. Additionally, these legal minds produce


much of the research we rely upon to inform the public on the value of outdoor sports, as well as educating legislators on the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Lastly, Foundation gifts support the critical education programs that we operate, like the ever-growing Conservation Adventures curriculum currently used in dozens of schools by thousands of students across the country. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible.

Regardless the fight, your dollars make a huge difference. There are many worthy causes out there that you could support, and we know, especially right now, there are countless and ever-increasing demands on your resources. We are grateful for you and your support. 🏹

If you'd like to discuss making a gift through your business, your estate, a private foundation or an individual gift, please reach out to Aaron Carmichael at acarmichael@sportsmensalliance.org or his direct line at 317-910-1966.

MAKING SCIENCE FUN, ENGAGING AND EDUCATIONAL

OUR CONSERVATION SCIENCE CURRICULUM GETS STUDENTS OUT OF THEIR SEATS WHILE TEACHING THEM ABOUT THE OUTDOORS.

Designed as a hands-on, project-based learning experience, Conservation Science turns boring concepts and classroom work into an interactive, thought-provoking education in the activities that fund the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation—hunting, fishing, trapping, boating and the shooting sports. 

WESTERN BROWN HIGH SCHOOL Mt. Orab, Ohio

Western Brown High School uses our curriculum within their Agriculture Program. The students agreed that the highlight of the year was when the class took part in the Game and Fish Anatomy Lab. In the lab, students learned to field-dress, skin, butcher, package and prepare a whitetail deer. They also successfully completed the hunter education course. Using our Fishing Line Break Strength Lab kits, students tested the primary kinds of fishing lines using different fishing knots and recorded where and at what weight line breaks occurred.



EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL Beaver, Ohio

Students at Eastern High set up an outdoor lab using wildlife feeders and trail cameras. Students set up trail cameras around the feeders to capture the wildlife traffic passing through, including deer, raccoons and bobcats! All of the students received their hunter education certificates after taking hunter education as part of the class. They also participated in a kayak trip as part of the course, and their school was awarded a Boater Safety Education Grant by the Ohio Division Parks and Watercraft. The school will receive kayaks, paddles, personal floatation devices and a trailer so that they can hold future kayak programs for students, the public and partner organizations.

LEBANON HIGH SCHOOL Lebanon, Ohio

Lebanon High School was the first school to have Conservation Science as an approved course by the NCAA. This was accomplished by working with the Ohio Division of Wildlife and Ohio River Basin Alliance to provide outdoor skills experiences to students. The students participated in a wide variety of activities like archery, nature hikes, kayaking and fishing. Throughout their semester-long course, they completed several impressive conservation projects.

KENTON HIGH SCHOOL Kenton, Ohio

At Kenton High School, the Conservation Science curriculum is utilized as an elective. The course satisfies a combination of Health, Physical Education and Science. These students completed not only the hunter education course, but trapper education as well. Students will take the boater safety course in future years. Hands-on projects such as making fishing lures and tying flies, archery and clay target shooting were enjoyed by all.



COURTESY OF EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL (TOP); ADOBE STOCK (CENTER, BOTTOM LEFT, BOTTOM RIGHT)



GEAR GUIDE

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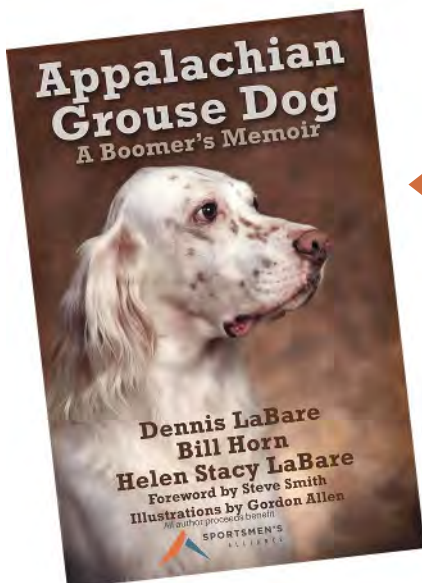


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◀ **APPALACHIAN GROUSE DOG: A BOOMER'S MEMOIR**

Appalachian Grouse Dog: A Boomer's Memoir by Dennis LaBare will draw in a generation of readers who pursue the traditional outdoors. Here, in clear-eyed prose, is the life-changing story of one boy and one dog who made it through the cacophony of modern America to a life of outdoor living that celebrates the deep roots of another place and time, simply, with a dog, a gun and time enough. Author proceeds benefit Sportsmen's Alliance. MSRP: \$32.95; available at sunburypress.com



ON THE TABLE

RED SNAPPER WITH CHERRY TOMATOES IS A PERFECT SUMMER DISH.

By Hank Shaw

One of the things I love about summer cooking is its simplicity: ripe summer produce and simply cooked, freshly caught fish. This is a red snapper recipe, but any firm, white fish works. Other snappers, black seabass, striped bass, Pacific rockfish or lingcod, small-mouth bass, walleye, redfish or grouper. If you don't want to use red tomatoes,

use any cherry tomatoes. To make this a quick weeknight meal, skip drying the tomatoes and just toss them in at the last minute. Finally, the herb element is also up to you. I like the combination of mint, corn and tomatoes, but parsley, cilantro, oregano, marjoram and chives all work. Use whatever is fresh in your garden and feel free to play with the recipe. After all, it's summertime! 🍷

Prep Time:
10 min.

Cook Time:
1 hr.

Total Time:
1 hr. 10 min.

Servings:
4 people

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 lbs. cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- Olive oil to coat tomatoes
- Salt
- 2 to 3 ears sweet corn, kernels cut off (about 2 c.)
- 4 red snapper fillets, skin on or off
- 1/4 c. clarified butter or vegetable oil
- 3 tbsp. minced parsley, cilantro or mint
- Black pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Coat the halved cherry tomatoes in some oil and salt them well. Place them, cut side up, on a baking sheet and put in the oven at 200 degrees F; no need to preheat. If you have a convection oven, turn the fan on. Or, you can put the tomatoes on a rack in your dehydrator and set it to 135 degrees F. It will take longer for the tomatoes to get semi-dry, but it won't heat up your kitchen. Cook the tomatoes until they are about half dried, about 45 minutes to 1 hour in the oven, a bit longer in a dehydrator. Keep an eye on the tomatoes every 20 minutes or so, as different tomatoes and different ovens will give you different results.

2. About 20 minutes before the tomatoes are ready, take the fish out of the fridge and salt it well.

3. When the tomatoes are ready, heat the clarified butter in a large sauté pan over high heat. As the butter is heating, pat the fish dry with paper towels. If you want a crispy skin, use a butter knife to scrape down the skin; this removes a bit more moisture and results in a crispier skin.

4. When the butter is hot, lay the fish skin-side down in the pan, even if there is no skin; this side is flatter. Turn the heat down to medium-high and sear the fish well. As it cooks, use a spoon to baste the other side of the fish until it's just barely cooked: About 30 seconds of basting will do the trick. When the bottom of the fish is nicely browned, about 6 to 8 minutes, it should be ready. It should also lift up from the pan easily. Set the fish on a cutting board skin side up.

5. Add the corn to the pan and toss to combine. Sprinkle it with salt. Add the tomatoes and the parsley and toss to combine. Cook for about 30 seconds and turn off the heat. Grind some black pepper over everything. To serve, give everyone some of the corn-tomato mixture and set a piece of fish on top. Serve with bread, potatoes or rice.

Find more recipes from Hank Shaw's Hunter Angler Gardener Cook website, honest-food.net, and more fish recipes from his new book Hook Line & Supper.



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EXHIBIT 2

THE SPORTSMEN'S ADVOCATE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

SPRING 2022

THROWING CONSERVATION TO THE WOLVES

**Anti's Seek To
Replace Hunters
With Predators**

**TRAMPLED: Native Wildlife
Overrun by Feral Horses**

**How Your Tax Dollars Fund
Anti-Hunters' Lawsuits**

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THE SPORTSMEN'S ADVOCATE

VOLUME 1 · ISSUE 1

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Ron Spomer, John Taranto**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Welcome to your new member benefit: *The Sportsmen's Advocate*! We're excited to bring you a full, revamped membership magazine, which will include more information and insight into the tactics of the animal-rights movement and more connection with the organization.

As you flip through the all-new look and feel of our magazine, you will see stories highlighting the threats, fights and victories we took on this spring—no small feat, especially in some states and when it involves the federal government. We'll have more member-driven content: profiles and pictures of members and social-media followers, upcoming events and great gear from Sportsmen's Alliance Business Partners. Don't miss the progress report on Conservation Adventures, our conservation-based high-school science curriculum that educated thousands of students on the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation in just its first year.

While we're excited to bring you more member content and current affairs from state legislatures and courtrooms, the expansion of the magazine allows us to go more in-depth about our mission, fights and our opposition. For a look at the bigger picture of what the animal-rights movement hopes to accomplish—and how they're going about it—don't miss the feature, "One Cog to End It All." We connect the dots and explain how the individual attacks on predator management in the West this spring, if left unchecked, will eventually break the North American Model. Likewise, our partners at Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation provide a fantastic piece on those same groups corrupting the justice system to not only end wildlife management, but how they also get rich doing so ... at the expense of taxpayers!

Finally, we'd like to welcome some new faces to the SA mission. Todd Adkins and Dillon Barto have energized our government affairs team, while Courtney Nicolson has made an immediate impact on the communications team. You can read more about each of them in this issue.

Thank you for your support and belief in what we do. Our members truly make the Sportsmen's Alliance special. Your continued support allows our strategic growth and is what drives our mission. Together, the future is bright!



Evan Heusinkveld
President and CEO

The Sportsmen's Advocate is the official publication of the Sportsmen's Alliance.

Our mission is to protect and advance America's heritage of hunting, fishing and trapping by uniting sportsmen to protect against legal and legislative attacks by the animal-rights movement, win public support for outdoor sports, ensure the future of this heritage by involving families in the outdoor experience, and by promoting the sportsmen's stewardship role in the scientific management of America's fish and wildlife.

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Lower 48 Wolves RELISTED: Now What?

GREAT LAKES STATES STRIPPED OF MANAGEMENT DECISIONS AND METHODS.

When District Court Judge Jeffery White of the Northern District of California ruled in favor of three radical animal-rights and environmental groups seeking to return wolves in the “Lower 48 states” to protections under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), confusion and questions among sportsmen followed. Here’s the skinny.

The Fight: In 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), under the Trump Administration, delisted wolves nationwide. Defenders of Wildlife, the Natural Resources Defense Council and Wildearth Guardians filed suit against the USFWS and the Department of Interior seeking to overturn that action.

What the Ruling Did: Judge White’s 26-page ruling returned wolves in the contiguous United States to protections afforded under the ESA—meaning the federal government still controls their management and that individual states cannot hold hunting seasons. In other words, it ended state management and hunting in Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota.

What the Ruling Didn’t Do: Wolves in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and parts of surrounding states, which were delisted

by congressional action, still fall under state control and can be managed through hunting seasons. Wolves in Alaska have never been listed under the ESA and so were never questioned in this case—hence the shorthand reference to the “Lower 48” case.


Jurisdiction and California: While the jurisdictional issues are often confusing, in this case, the ESA is a federal law, so the scope of the judge’s decision has a national impact. Because Congress delisted wolves in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming directly, management decisions, including hunting, are left in place. But there are no such protections outside of those states.

Legal Mumbo Jumbo: Among other points, Judge White found that “the Service’s analysis relied on two core wolf populations to delist wolves nationally and failed to provide a reasonable interpretation of the ‘significant portion of its range’ standard.” Basically, he said that no matter how many wolves are found in two separate groups throughout six states, it doesn’t mean that they’re recovered throughout the rest of the country, and that USFWS didn’t give a good indicator of where they should be found.

Issues with Appeal: No, starting a petition or calling your representatives

With Great Lakes wolves again protected under the ESA, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan are unable to hold hunting seasons.

won’t work. This is a court case and is bound by law, and it is supposed to be protected from political interference. There’s a possibility of an appeal, but a couple of issues make that unlikely: the willingness of the Biden Administration to do so, the legal arguments upon which to appeal and the fact that any appeal would be heard in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which likely wouldn’t be a friendly courtroom.

Future Moves: The Sportsmen’s Alliance has fought for delisting of wolves in the Great Lakes states for more than 15 years. In the 2017 Great Lakes wolf ruling, the court laid out a road map for the USFWS to delist the Western Great Lakes wolves and dismantled many of the dangerous and unsupported holdings from a lower court decision. The ruling also demonstrated that the delisting of Great Lakes wolves by distinct population segment was appropriate to scientifically manage recovered wolf populations. This means that among our ways forward, as of now, one approach is to delist individual distinct populations one by one. 



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IT'S PERSONAL: Protecting the National Wildlife Refuge

AS THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION CONDUCTS SETTLEMENT TALKS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL EXTREMISTS, THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE HAS SOUNDED THE ALARM AND WILL DEFEND A PUBLIC-LANDS MOVEMENT WE STARTED.

The litigious Center for Biological Diversity has sued the federal government over expansion of hunting and fishing opportunities made under the Trump Administration in 2020 on 2.3 million acres within the national wildlife refuge system. The extreme environmental organization claims that critical habitat for endangered species will be trampled by hunters (but somehow not by hikers or bird watchers), that hunters will mistakenly shoot grizzly bears while black bear hunting or in self-defense, and that lead fishing tackle and fragments from lead ammunition threaten to poison a myriad of endangered species.

“A few short months ago, the Biden Administration was touting the largest expansion of hunting and fishing in history on these lands, and now they’re negotiating with animal-rights activists over hunting opportunities, while excluding sportsmen from having a seat at the table,” said Evan Heusinkveld, president and CEO of the Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation, which has been preparing to defend hunting on wildlife refuges in the case. “It’s no surprise that animal-rights and anti-hunting groups want to stop hunting, but sportsmen shouldn’t tolerate being shut out as the Biden Administration negotiates away hunting opportunities on public lands.”

Many national wildlife refuges are popular public-land spots for hunting waterfowl, upland birds, whitetail deer and other game.

The Sportsmen’s Alliance was preparing to intervene in the case and was the first organization to point out the possibility of losing the public-land access and opportunities. We will continue to fight for the expansion of hunting and fishing on refuges nationwide, because for us it’s personal. The Sportsmen’s Alliance was at the forefront of the 1997 Refuge Improvement Act and helped shepherd it through Congress, which has allowed every president since to open millions of acres for hunting, fishing and trapping. 

A HISTORY OF THE 1997 REFUGE IMPROVEMENT ACT



2003 ● Fund for Animals sues the federal government over **expansion of hunting** on 39 refuges since passage of the 1997 Refuge Improvement Act, citing the same arguments they're using today: concerns over endangered species and the disturbing of habitat. They lose the case in court. Again.
The more things change, the more they stay the same.

● ● ● **Late 1970s to Early 1990s**

Animal-rights groups bring repeated **lawsuits to end hunting** on refuges. Democratic and Republican administrations both successfully defend refuge hunting in court.

● ● ● **1993**

Fund for Animals files an anti-hunting lawsuit. Instead of mounting a strong legal defense, the Clinton Administration pursues settlement talks.

● ● ● **1994**

The Sportsmen's Alliance (SA) and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), through their legal counsel, Bill Horn and Paul Lenzini, draft legislation making hunting and fishing **"purposes" of the refuge system** and express legislative determinations that hunting is a legitimate use.



1997 ●

With a new Congress seated and the Clinton Administration still declaring a veto, the bill's co-sponsor and fellow Democrat, John Dingell, tells Clinton that opposing it isn't a good idea. Clinton instructs Secretary Babbitt to negotiate with Rep. Young, who appoints **SA legal counsel Bill Horn** as lead negotiator for himself and the hunting community.

It takes only a couple of months to hammer out a deal. The key is to drop the "fishing and hunting are purposes" language and use "hunting and fishing are priority public uses" along with language that says once the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) determines fishing and hunting are "compatible" with refuge conservation, USFWS then has an affirmative duty to "facilitate" these activities.

When it becomes evident that a deal is in place, animal-rights organizations try to derail the entire process. Secretary Babbitt excoriates the groups for acting in bad faith. The new bill is drafted and passes the House 407-1, the lone dissenter being anti-public lands Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX).

While this is happening, SA, AFWA and others engineer a deal with Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) to bypass Sen. Chafee's committee where the bill previously stalled. The Senate then passes the measure by voice vote, sending it to the president's desk.

The Sportsmen's Alliance isn't initially invited to the White House signing ceremony. Secretary Babbitt intervenes, and our legal counsel, Bill Horn, who orchestrated the entire deal, attends on our behalf. (He still has one of the pens President Clinton used to sign the measure into law.)



● ● ● **1995**

SA and AFWA take the draft to **Rep. Don Young (R-AK)**, chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, and then reach out to Rep. John Dingell (D-MI), dean of the House, and Rep. Bill Brewster (D-OK) to gain bipartisan support. The three become primary sponsors of the bill, which would later garner numerous co-sponsors.



● ● ● **1996**

The **Clinton Administration** strongly opposes the bill, and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt informs Congress that the president will veto the bill if passed. That only galvanizes the hunting community, which pushes harder and passes the bill in the House with a veto-proof majority. Unfortunately, the bill stalls in a Senate committee under chairman Sen. John Chafee (R-RI).



LOC.GOV. (BOTTOM RIGHT); COURTESY OF REP. DON YOUNG (BOTTOM LEFT); COURTESY OF USFWS (MIDDLE LEFT, TOP RIGHT, TOP LEFT)



MAKING YOUR IMPACT KNOWN

SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE RESEARCH ILLUSTRATES THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HUNTING AND SHOOTING IN EVERY AMERICAN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT.

For the first-time ever, economic analysis of how America's hunters and sport shooters contribute to national and state economies is available for all 50 states down to every legislative district. A new report by the Sportsmen's Alliance and Southwick Associates reveals that recreational hunters and sport shooters contributed \$149 billion to the national economy, supported nearly 970,000 jobs and created more than \$45 billion in wages and income in 2020.

"The Sportsmen's Alliance takes a three-prong strategy to protecting hunting, fishing and trapping nationwide," said Evan Heusinkveld, president and CEO of Sportsmen's Alliance. "Our advocacy is our most visible, but we also conduct research that guides our advocacy and supports our education efforts. This economic impact study makes it easy for


sportsmen to educate friends, family and legislators on the importance of hunters and sport shooters to our national, state and local economies, as well as conservation funding at the state and federal level."

The economic effects are immense when considered on a national level, but these sportsmen-related activities have crucial impacts on state and local economies, too. Never compiled and presented in this way before, the estimated economic impact of hunters and shooters has been quantified for each of the 435 U.S. congressional districts and is available as printable infographics at sportsmensalliance.org/reports.

"The economic impact of hunting and sport shooting to local, state and the federal economy cannot be overstated," said Rob Southwick, president of Southwick Associates. "If hunting and shooting were a company, the jobs it supports would

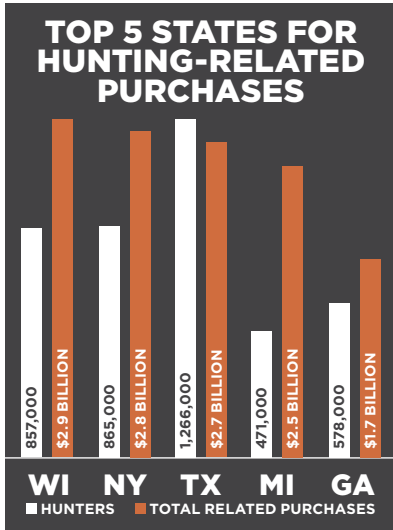
Migratory bird and upland game hunters contributed more than \$8 billion in purchases to federal, state and local economies in 2020.

place it as the third-largest private-sector employer, and \$65 billion, the retail sales it generates, would place it at fifty-second on the Fortune 500 list."

The report contains the economic impact of hunters and sport shooters at the national, state and legislative-district level, and includes the total number of participants, how much they spend on related purchases, the total multiplier effect, number of jobs directly supported by those sportsmen, as well as the salaries and wages connected to those jobs. Additionally, contributions to the gross domestic product and state, local and federal taxes paid are available at the district, statewide and national level, as well as by popular hunting and firearm types. 



Download printable infographics that show the economic impact of hunting and shooting in your state or legislative district at sportsmensalliance.org/reports.



DISTRICT 12 (home of Rep. Nancy Pelosi) accounted for 38,300 hunters and shooters, who spent \$51 million and were directly responsible for 600 jobs and \$14 million in taxes.

In **DISTRICT 28** (home of Rep. Adam Schiff), which includes the anti-hunting West Hollywood, 8,000 hunters spent \$27 million, contributing \$3 million in state and local taxes and \$4 million in federal taxes.

DISTRICT 34, which includes Los Angeles, had 25,900 target shooters, who spent \$21 million and were responsible for \$6 million in state, local and federal taxes.

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF RECREATIONAL HUNTING IN THE U.S. BY TYPE

Hunting Type	Retail Sales	Total Multiplier Effect	Salaries And Wages	GDP Contributions	State And Local Taxes	Federal Taxes
Deer	\$23.4	\$50.8	\$14.9	\$27.5	\$2.5	\$3.8
Migratory Bird	\$4.4	\$10.1	\$3.2	\$5.6	\$0.5	\$0.8
Upland Game	\$3.7	\$8.1	\$2.5	\$4.6	\$0.4	\$0.6
All Hunting	\$49.4	\$109.9	\$32.2	\$58	\$5.4	\$8.3

Amounts listed in billions of dollars. All hunting types supported 688,500 jobs in 2020. Deer hunting was responsible for 325,300 jobs; migratory bird hunting, 70,300; upland game hunting, 54,900.

Heroes & Villains

WHO WE LIKE AND WHO WE FIGHT IN THE BATTLE FOR CONSERVATION

A 30-year veteran of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, **Munig sounded the alarm that anti-hunters were flooding the department with comments concerning predator management** and that pro-hunting comments were almost zero. Multiple animal-rights organizations coordinated their efforts to inundate the department with calls to end mountain lion, bobcat and bear hunting during the five-year regulation adoption process. The tactic has marked a distinct new approach to ending hunting nationwide. In response, the Sportsmen's Alliance and our partners issued calls to action for members through email and social media. The Alliance submitted comments on the need for the department to depend on sound, scientific wildlife management of predators and to reject anti-hunting comments.



HERO: AMBER MUNIG
Big Game Program Management Supervisor,
Arizona Game and Fish Department

VILLAIN: LORNA SMITH

Member, Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission



The former executive director of Western Wildlife Outreach, an organization dedicated to the protection of grizzly bears, black bears, cougars and gray wolves, Smith was appointed to the commission in January 2021. In a year of serving, **Smith, true to her roots, has advocated for predators by muddling any science brought forward by biologists for predator management**, citing unlikely scenarios and the need for an overabundance of caution. When a study showed dismal elk-calf survival rates and the herd dropping below established goals due to mountain lion depredation, Smith's answer was to eliminate elk tags for hunters and simply lower the goal size of the herd. 🏹

COURTESY OF AMBER MUNIG (TOP); WFWC MEETING SCREENSHOT BY BRIAN LYNN

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SUNDAY HUNTING PUSH RESURRECTED IN EAST

SEVEN STATES CONSIDER NEW BILLS THAT WOULD CHANGE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS.

Antiquated blue laws that restrict—or outright prohibit—hunting on Sunday in several states have loosened up in the last several years, and the 2022 legislative session saw several more bills introduced that would continue that trend. (The following updates were current as this issue of *The Sportsmen's Advocate* went to press.)

“Expanding Sunday hunting is an easy way to expand access for sportsmen and -women throughout the country,” said Dillon Barto, manager of state services at the Sportsmen's Alliance. “Lack of hunting opportunities is the most frequently cited reason why people give up hunting. It's high time we opened this

opportunity for the remaining Eastern states that still have these unnecessary and harmful restrictions.”



Maryland: The Old Line State has taken a piecemeal approach to opening Sunday hunting. The idea is to open individual counties with citizen support. There were 15 bills between the House and Senate to open Sunday hunting on both public and private property in seven different counties, including a House bill to open it statewide (while also creating

uniform safety zones for bowhunters) and a Senate bill to open migratory bird hunting on Sunday.



New Jersey: Two different bills in New Jersey would open Sunday hunting. Assembly Bill 2591 would permit Sunday deer hunting with firearms on wildlife management areas, private property and federal military land. Senate Bill 1118 would open deer hunting with bow and arrow on federal military land.



Pennsylvania: The Sportsmen's Alliance helped break the seal on Sunday hunting here a couple of years ago, and the push continues. Senate Bill 607 would expand Sunday hunting throughout the state for all hunting seasons. It passed the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee and was awaiting a floor vote.



Massachusetts: Six different bills permitted variations in Sunday hunting that ranged from opening it completely to allowing deer hunting only or archery hunting only. The bills were pending before the Joint Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee.



Maine: Along with Massachusetts, Maine is the only other state with a complete ban on hunting during the Sabbath. However, that could change. A joint legislative committee agreed to advance Sunday hunting legislation. Earlier this session, the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife directed the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to conduct a study on public attitudes on Sunday hunting. The Sportsmen's Alliance was a financial contributor to the research. With the study complete, the committee moved forward with Sunday hunting legislation, and Senate Bill 730 was heard in the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. It was voted down 8-3. 🏹



Virginia: From 1643 to 2014, a complete ban on Sunday hunting existed in the commonwealth before the General Assembly agreed that hunting could take place on private lands. This year, the last vestiges of the Sunday prohibition have fallen as the full assembly passed Senate Bill 8, which lifted the public-land closure. The governor was expected to sign the bill into law.



South Carolina: Palmetto State hunters are leaning on House Bill 4614, which permits Sunday hunting in wildlife management areas. It was pending before the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee.



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THE WAY FORWARD

STATES EXPAND EDUCATION AND EQUIPMENT USE.

It's easy to become disenchanted when you look at the depth and breadth of attacks sportsmen face every legislative session. A never-ending stream of bills threaten to undermine hunting and trapping in old and new ways alike. But one way forward is expanding education and equipment use.

Normalizing hunting and shooting in the public school system introduces students to aspects of our activities that they may not receive at home. Education undermines ignorance—a major hurdle for us in mainstream media—and the more people, especially youth, who understand our activities, the better. The Sportsmen's Alliance is working to this very end by introducing an innovative high-school curriculum that applies scientific principles through the lens of conservation while explaining the North American model (see page 45). Likewise, two states have introduced legislation that pushes hunting and shooting education forward.

Colorado, which just defeated a serious threat from legislation that would have banned mountain lion and bobcat hunting, has introduced House Bill 1168. It passed out of the House with strong bipartisan support and at press time awaited further hearings. The legislation gives local schools the ability to provide a hunter education course to seventh graders and as an elective class to any other grade.

In **Kansas**, Senate Bill 522 provides school districts the ability to teach the National Rifle Association's Eddie Eagle Gunsafe Program from kindergarten through eighth grade and the Department of Wildlife and Parks' Hunter Education Program from grades six through 12.

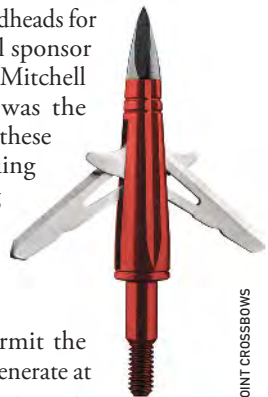
Beyond education, expanding equipment and logical, ethical technology use are important in the moral fight to protect our passions, as well as attracting new participants within our ranks. Two western states have done so.

Idaho Gov. Brad Little signed legislation allowing the use of lighted nocks

Teaching hunter-ed courses in schools benefits youngsters, while permitting mechanical broadheads increases bowhunters' options.

and mechanical broadheads for archery seasons. Bill sponsor State Rep. Brandon Mitchell noted that Idaho was the last state to permit these useful tools for finding arrows and making effective kills.

The **Utah** legislature sent a bill to Gov. Spencer Cox that would permit the use of air rifles that generate at least 2,000 pounds per square inch to be used for hunting. Senate Bill 205 allows the Utah Wildlife Board and the Division of Wildlife Resources to determine which species may be hunted with air rifles. Gov. Cox's signature would allow Utah to join most other states that also allow air rifles for hunting. 





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HOW TO INTELLIGENTLY ARGUE FOR HUNTING

TACTFULLY PRESENT FACTS TO EXPOUND A RATIONAL CASE
FOR OUR SPORT IN THE FACE OF IGNORANCE.



Emotional rhetoric drives much of our media coverage, social media and even many in-person interactions these days. When it comes to hunting, those quips reduce complex issues to simple sound bites, often putting sportsmen in a tough spot. Here's how to successfully undermine one such often-repeated and foolish argument, with notes on talking points, to help you put your best foot forward for bystanders and lurkers listening to the conversation. 

THE STATEMENT:

“THEY WERE HERE FIRST!”

WHAT IT EXCUSES:

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

THE RESPONSE:

Yes, animals^[1] have been in North America a long time, but so have people. Going back to prehistoric time through settlement of the continent, we've shared the landscape with wildlife. We've hunted them for meat, skins, bones and feathers^[2] to nourish and clothe our bodies,^[3] as well as to decorate them and the walls^[4] of our homes. We've also continually had conflict with them, especially large predators such as wolves and bears, which have always posed a danger to individuals and domestic animals.^[5]

Modern society's large cities, small towns, farms^[6] and road systems have drastically changed the continent and how we and animals live within it. There is far less habitat and far more people,^[7] which leads to more potential conflicts. Unless you're advocating for genocide or the wholesale destruction of cities^[8] and displacement of citizens, it doesn't matter who was here first.^[9] Like it or not,^[10] wild animals don't get to maraud our yards, pastures or homes to eat our flowers, livestock or pets.^[11] The best we can do^[12] is to manage the situation to reduce the odds of conflict.

There are many keys^[13] to doing that, but the biggest is successful wildlife management,^[14] which balances predator and prey species with available habitat so that all three remain in healthy ranges.^[15] If you want more habitat, then you must invest^[16] in it; hunter-conservationists^[17] have reclaimed and enhanced^[18] tens of millions of acres to the benefit of thousands of species.^[19] But the bottom line is that when human-wildlife conflict takes place, a resolution is needed. We can't just ignore the problem; that would be irresponsible for both people and wildlife.^[20]

¹Insert any species here. ²Reiterates hunting as a legitimate use of entire animal. ³Underscores healthy aspects of game and many uses of body parts. ⁴Legitimizes use of trophies from the hunt, going back to cave drawings and indigenous jewelry. ⁵Tribes, farmers, people around the world have always had conflict with predators.

⁶Everyone plays a role, not just those living where conflicts happen. ⁷Acknowledge this simple fact as the crux of the problem. ⁸Frame anti-hunters' ultimate ideological resolution as ridiculously as possible. ⁹Restate and deny their argument. ¹⁰Anti's don't have to like truth to acknowledge it. ¹¹Nobody likes pets to get eaten. ¹²Put forward a reasonable solution.

¹³Take away arguments about trash cans, fences, flagging or other deterrents by acknowledging them. ¹⁴While other points can help, ultimately wildlife management is the key. ¹⁵Healthy is the key. Poor health of any of the three will likely result in more conflict. ¹⁶This doesn't just happen, and it isn't free. Put them on the spot by asking how much they or anti-hunting groups contribute. ¹⁷Continue to highlight the inextricable link between hunting and conservation. ¹⁸Reclaiming creates new habitat where it didn't exist; enhancing makes habitats better and increases its biodiversity and carrying capacity. ¹⁹Yes, we've done this for game species, but all other plant and animal species benefit from it. ²⁰Paints you as reasonable, results-orientated, logical and caring for both people and animals.

MAKE YOUR POINT

Having trouble framing an argument related to animal rights, wildlife management or aspects of hunting, fishing and trapping? Email us (info@sportsmensalliance.org) and we'll help you break it down here!

SACRIFICING NATIVE WILDLIFE FOR SACRED ICONS

TENS OF MILLIONS OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS FUND WILD HORSE CARE WHILE NATIVE WILDLIFE SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS ARE TRAMPLED UNDER HOOF.

By Ron Spomer



Do you think it makes sense to spend \$80 million of your tax dollars each year supporting a common, abundant domestic animal that provides no meat, no hides, no fur, no wool, no feathers, no energy—*nada*—while simultaneously depleting and endangering native wildlife?

Seriously. Would you vote to have your tax dollars fund the increase and maintenance of a common domestic animal that returns nothing on your investment while using up

the resources essential to the survival of native wildlife like threatened sage grouse, desert bighorns, mule deer and even songbirds like hummingbirds and meadowlarks?

Well, that's what the U.S. federal government does—contrary to the recommendations of the very scientists it hires (also at taxpayer expense) to assess and manage these free-loading domestic animals. That's right. We pay wildlife biologists to manage feral domestic horses. And all to placate perennially noisy, perpetually dissatisfied animal-rights agitators.



Feral horses are too often romanticized as “wild mustangs.” In truth, they are nothing more than a destructive, yet protected, invasive species.

The situation is infuriating and, if you love wild places and native wildlife, it can almost make you cry. Recently, one of these animal-rights groups continued to do wrong by urging Interior Secretary Deb Haaland “to retain horse population sizes that will maintain TNEB [Thriving Natural Ecological Balance].”

ADOBE STOCK

It is to laugh! That’s like retaining feral hogs to maintain ecological balance. It’s like feeding and protecting feral house cats to maintain songbirds. It’s akin to protecting pythons in the Everglades, Asian carp in the Mississippi, zebra and quagga mussels in the Great Lakes. Canadian thistles on the High Plains. Cheat grass in sage grouse country.

Paying to protect and increase feral horses on fragile public lands is worse than selfish, worse than foolish. It’s environmentally criminal.

And *you* pay for it.

This doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t care for horses. Thousands of horse lovers do that every day. They keep horses in pastures, shelter them in barns, treat them for diseases. They care for them. But so-called animal-rights horse lovers force lost, feral horses to live desperate lives under conditions that would get a horse owner dragged into court for animal abuse.

Our so-called wild horses roam dry, overgrazed deserts and semi-deserts. They make do with poor and insufficient forage, dirty water, injuries, worms, disease, fighting, biting, and broken legs and jaws, without veterinary care. And all the while they pound, chew and abuse native vegetation, commandeer scarce water holes, drive off native deer and sheep, and deplete nesting and escape habitat for ground-nesting birds.

In short, they do what you would expect a non-native, invasive species would do: They negatively impact native wildlife. It’s bad in the best of times. It’s insanity when we are losing native birds and mammals so fast that a species as widespread and common as the sage grouse has declined more than 80 percent since the 1970s. So why do we put up with this?

Emotions. Tender imaginations. Persistent myths. The romantic myth of the wild mustang, which is nothing but the offspring of horses likely run off from the Coronado expedition.

Feral horses are much like feral hogs in Florida that ran off from the De Soto expedition hundreds of years ago. However, in the 1970s, a well-meaning but ecologically ignorant bunch of romantic horse lovers convinced an equally ignorant bunch of elected officials to make feral horses sacred. Over the years they tightened the screws. Feral horses take precedence over all native wildlife on Western federal lands where they roam. They are the only single species we spend \$80 million annually feeding and sheltering.

You, dear friend, literally pay to feed tens of thousands of “wild mustangs” confined to corrals (pens or “prisons” if we can borrow the hyperbolic language of animal-rights agitators) until they die of old age, which could take more than 20 years. Meanwhile pronghorns, bighorn sheep, mule deer, elk, desert cottontails, sage grouse, Brewer’s sparrows, desert tortoises and dozens of other native species dwindle away because their habitat has been converted into horse flesh.

Pragmatic people have long advised against managing wildlife by emotion because it flies in the face of nature. Forcing an invasive species like the horse—wonderful domestic animal though it is—to eke out a living on fragile Western lands is disrespecting Mother Nature. Big time.

It’s time to stop this feral horse abuse, of the horses themselves as well as our land and wildlife. Round up the feral horses. Give them good homes. Put them on pastures in the East if you want. Prominent animal-rights organizations have hundreds of millions of dollars. I’m sure they’ll pay for it all. 🏹

ONE COG TO END IT ALL

HOW THE ANIMAL-RIGHTS MOVEMENT IS
CORRUPTING THE NORTH
AMERICAN MODEL OF
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
TO DESTROY ALL HUNTING,
PIECE BY PIECE, FROM THE TOP DOWN

By Brian Lynn, Vice President,
Marketing and Communications

If you've paid even a little attention to the regulatory, legislative and legal battles sportsmen have faced this spring, you know that animal activists have targeted predator management at an unprecedented clip. The Humane Society of the United States, Center for Biological Diversity, Mountain Lion Foundation, Natural Resources Defense Council and Defenders of Wildlife, among others, have leveraged every facet of government since January to undermine scientific wildlife management across the West—which, if implemented, *will* spread south and east.

In California, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) petitioned the state fish and game commission to end all bear hunting outright. This comes a year after HSUS-backed legislation that did the same was introduced and then pulled by the sponsor after immediate backlash from the hunting community. HSUS is now trying to take it out of the hands of politicians and the public by using a petition. If they fail with the commission, California will likely see a ballot initiative in the future that will seek to end bear hunting outright.



In Washington state, the regulation process for the spring permit-only bear hunt was turned into a soap opera of epic proportions. Political malfeasance, legal red tape, unappointed commissioners and commissioners muddying scientific findings by repeating HSUS talking points in meetings swung the vote against a bear hunt taking place ... and then back again ... and possibly back again to no hunt taking place after the appointment of three new commissioners, two of which have backgrounds in large carnivore protectionism (as opposed to conservation).

ABOVE: Managing predators goes hand-in-hand with managing big-game species. Anti-hunters, however, argue predator populations should go unchecked to run their course, destroying deer and elk herds.

The Arizona Game and Fish Commission was flooded with calls and emails after the HSUS, Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) and Mountain Lion Foundation (MLF) held a webinar for their followers on what to say concerning banning mountain lion, bobcat and bear hunting during an open comment period for the state's five-year management plan.

ADOBE STOCK

Colorado faced legislation that would have banned all mountain lion, bobcat and lynx hunting. It had a real chance of moving through the legislature, but was shot down in committee after sportsmen made calls, sent emails and showed up to rally on the capitol steps the day of the hearing.

Like California, Arizona and Colorado face the real possibility of ballot initiatives in the near future that accomplish these goals.

The attacks are nothing new. But while the coordination, rehearsed talking points and array of attacks came fast and furious—petitions, legislation and public comment periods were all used simultaneously—the arguments have evolved in a very dangerous way.

The animal-rights movement is attempting to usurp the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and, if we're not diligent, they might just be successful.

ORIGINS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL

The roots of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAMWC) reach back to the early 20th century as remedies to the unabashed exploitation of habitats and wildlife. Early conservationists and environmentalists recognized the unsustainable nature of societal demands on the resources; everything from unregulated logging to market hunting threatened habitats and wildlife nationwide. Those forefathers of conservation and environmentalism

reasoned that if man were the problem, ultimately man held the solution.

The Lacey Act of 1900, which brought an end to market hunting, was the first federal law protecting wildlife. From that point forward, conservationists began to create rules around hunting and fishing. Season dates and bag limits, the creation of the federal duck stamp and state hunting licenses, the Migratory Bird Act and other regulatory approaches began to create the system as we know it today.

Eventually, seven guiding principles formed the backbone of the NAMWC. Each tenet corrected a wildlife management mistake of the past or protected the model from corruption by special interests, such as wealthy citizens, large landowners or those opposed to hunting.

For 100 years the NAMWC has been responsible for not just recovering decimated game populations, but for the flourishing of those populations in today's ever-shrinking habitats. A self-funding mechanism drives the model to the tune of nearly \$3 billion per year in just license sales and federal excise taxes. By any measure, the model is a success and has become the standard of wildlife management worldwide.

Despite the obvious successes of the NAMWC, animal-rights activists are attempting to corrupt tenets of the model to advance their agenda. And they're finding success using verbiage from our own principles to do so.

Science-based wildlife management relies on factual research, something animal-rights advocates ignore in their emotional pleas.



REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES

The invasive tentacles of the “ecological” approach to game management seem innocuous to many, but only demonstrate how mindful and active we must be in every facet of management and protecting the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Animal-rights advocates have put the following plan into play throughout the United States.

STEP 1: Get anti-hunters on the commission. The fight for political relevance begins here. Control the commission and you control the state game agency, seasons and methods. By lowering standards for commissions, it’s easier to get anti-hunters and environmentalists on state boards.

WHERE WE’VE SEEN IT: Michigan, New Hampshire, Vermont.

STEP 2: Sow discord, vote against hunting. Once appointed to a game commission, it’s easy to question the science of biologists under the guise of safety and being judicially conservative with the resource.

WHERE WE’VE SEEN IT: This spring in Washington, anti-hunting commissioners muddied biologist-derived science and proposed scenarios outside the realm of probability. In California, a game commissioner questioned the relevance of the NAMWC in today’s society.

STEP 3: Adjust tag availability. As prey populations plummet, game biologists and commissions have no recourse except to reduce tag availability.

WHERE WE’VE SEEN IT: An elk study in southeast Washington proved extreme predation of calves, primarily by mountain lions. An anti-hunting commissioner questioned why increased predator management was needed when all that was required was a reduction in available elk tags in the unit to offset the loss of calves.

CORRUPTING THE MODEL

Animal-rights supporters have made statements in commission meetings, during public comment periods and in the media that *their* opinions and views of wildlife management hold equal—or even greater—weight than those of hunters, going so far as to explicitly cite the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation by name as evidence of their knowledge.



When populations of large carnivores like wolves expand, anti-hunters argue for increasing the size of so-called core ranges and corridors, rather than controlling the populations within their established ranges.

The first point of the NAMWC is that “wildlife is a public resource.” The animal-rights movement has perverted this point to justify their position by reasoning that since it’s a public resource, public opinion is paramount in the discharge of wildlife management. They use the same reasoning with another point, the “democracy of hunting.”

Obviously, their reasoning is corrupt.

What those advocates forget to mention, and what we as sportsmen need to fill in, is the context of those principles.

Wildlife *is* a public resource. However, that doesn’t mean public opinion determines management decisions. It indicates that fish and game, whether on public or private property, belongs to the public (harkening back to, and correcting, the European model of game ownership). The tenet states that governments at various levels have a role in managing the resource on behalf of all citizens to ensure long-term sustainability.

The “democracy of hunting” doesn’t suggest that a mob of dissidents will get their way, but rather that access to and use of wildlife isn’t dependent on wealth, prestige or land ownership—again, differentiating our model from the European model and protecting it from corruption by an oligarchy.

Another point, “wildlife can only be killed for a legitimate purpose” gets trotted out during discussion over predator hunting and other management practices. Activists stress *legitimate*, *wasteful* and *frivolous*, words found within the context of the principle, and reason that since hunters don’t eat coyotes or kill them in large numbers, as an example, then there isn’t a legitimate reason to hunt them. They fail to acknowledge that when hunting is implemented around calving season, both ungulates and livestock suffer decreased predation; however, their point has often been repeated in the media and to the non-hunting public, which is a public-relations problem for predator management.

Finally, even accepted science suffers under the warped reality of the animal-rights movement. As “the proper tool for discharge of wildlife policy,” the NAMWC states that science is to guide management decisions. For animal-rights activists,



Lacking proper management, mountain lion populations have devastating effects on not only wild ungulates but also domestic livestock.

THE SEVEN PILLARS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL

1. Wildlife is a public resource. In the United States, wildlife is considered a public resource, independent of the land or water where wildlife may live. Government at various levels have a role in managing that resource on behalf of all citizens and to ensure the long-term sustainability of wildlife populations.

2. Markets for game are eliminated. Before wildlife protection laws were enacted, commercial operations decimated populations of many species. Making it illegal to buy and sell meat, and other parts of game and nongame species, removed a huge threat to the survival of those species. A market in furbearers continues as a highly regulated activity, often to manage invasive wildlife.

3. Allocation of wildlife is controlled by law. Wildlife is a public resource managed by government. As a result, access to wildlife for the purpose of hunting is through legal mechanisms such as set hunting seasons, bag limits, license requirements, etc.

4. Wildlife can only be killed for a legitimate purpose. Wildlife is a shared resource that must not be wasted. The law prohibits killing wildlife for frivolous reasons.

5. Wildlife species are considered an international resource. Some species, such as migratory birds, cross national boundaries. Treaties such as the Migratory Bird Treaty and CITES recognize a shared responsibility to manage these species across national boundaries.

6. Science is the proper tool for discharge of wildlife policy. In order to manage wildlife as a shared resource fairly, objectively, and knowledgeably, decisions must be based on sound science such as annual waterfowl population surveys and the work of professional wildlife biologists.

7. Hunting is democratic. In keeping with democratic principles, government allocates access to wildlife without regard for wealth, prestige or land ownership.

science (when it suits them), means undeniable data with concrete outcomes among a world of variables. Population surveys, reasonable data and scientific principles that have been wildly successful in the recovery and management of wildlife for more than a century are no longer acceptable. Their answer is to pause all hunting until we have that data and all associated possibilities of it in hand, which is impossible to ever obtain or keep current. We've seen this tactic deployed during the Washington and California bear fights this spring.

BREAKING IT ALL

Whether it's denying science or evoking legitimacy, democracy and public opinion, the goal of the animal-rights movement is the same: to end all hunting. To do so, they're focusing on predator hunting. Predator management is just one cog in the model, but it's the one cog that can single-handedly bring down the entire model.

By ending predator management, mountain lions, wolves, coyotes, black bears and grizzly bears proliferate and have free reign. Increased predators on the landscape means increased pressure on ungulate populations. As ungulate populations drop to lower and lower levels due to predation, habitat loss, invasive species and severe weather, state fish and game agencies will have no recourse except to continually reduce the number of tags available for hunters.

As sportsmen, we hunt the biological surplus of available animals within specific habitats. If there is no surplus, then there are no tags issued and there is no hunting season. Without hunting seasons, especially for deer, there is no revenue stream through license and tag sales or via excise taxes on equipment sales.

At this point, the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation will collapse upon itself. Without a model that manages wildlife and provides funding, habitats, ecosystems and wildlife itself will all suffer. A broken model gives the animal-rights movement the opportunity to introduce a new model that reflects their utopian beliefs.

REWILDING: ACTIVISTS' FANTASY

The unrealistic model espoused by animal-rights advocates is that of "rewilding." First coined in 1990 by the radical environmental group Earth First!, rewilding sounds reasonably simplistic to the uninformed. Its basic mantra is: cores, corridors and carnivores.

CORES: True to its extreme environmental roots, rewilding works hand-in-hand with preservation (as opposed to conservation) and relies on the protection of vast amounts of wilderness from multiple use and the effects of mankind—even the involvement of man in any way.

CORRIDORS: Once forests and wildernesses have been protected, corridors with sufficient habitats to allow the travel of *enough* of an animal species from one core to another core area is required for genetic diversity.

CARNIVORES: Animals that have a disproportionate impact on an ecosystem compared to their numerical abundance are, according to

some, "keystone" species. In North America, those species are usually large predators.

The three pillars work together to create a circular argument completely devoid of reality and the presence of society. The expansion of large carnivore ranges also works to fuel further extension and protections for core and corridor ranges. The model allows for endless goalpost moving: if all three aren't complete, then more protections are necessary. Once all three are in place, then the goalpost is moved again until the exchange of genetics is legally documented and consistently established between core habitats.

We're seeing this exact model and argument in action when it comes to the delisting of wolves and grizzly bears. A crux of delisting through Distinct Population Segments is the impact of one population upon the other, the threat of the loss of genetic diversity and the need to connect one population with another—each of which has scientific and legal thresholds to satisfy.

This is the ultimate goal of true believers in animal rights—to break the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation by ending predator management and removing hunters from the model. Eliminating tools such as sporting dogs, trapping, public-land access and lead ammunition from the model will damage it, but removing predator management will eventually destroy it.

This is what they're attempting. This is what the Sportsmen's Alliance has fought for four decades. This is why deer hunters in the South, East and Midwest need to step up to protect predator hunting in the West. Because as they win the West, the army of activists will move across the country demanding the same legal protections and scientific documentation of wolves, mountain lions, bears and coyotes that they're pushing in Washington, California, Colorado and Arizona now. 🏹

As grizzly bear, wolf, mountain lion and other predator populations increase, wildlife managers are faced with reducing the number of big-game tags available to hunters.





EQUAL ACCESS TO INJUSTICE

CONGRESS CREATED THE EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACT TO GIVE EVERYDAY AMERICANS A FAIR SHOT IN COURT, BUT IT'S BEEN HIJACKED INTO A LAWSUIT FACTORY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS TO FUEL THEIR AGENDAS WITH TAXPAYER MONEY.

By the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, a Sportsmen's Alliance Partner

When the federal government listed grizzly bears as threatened in the Lower 48 under the newly minted Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1975, an estimated 136 grizzlies remained in the nearly 6-million-acre Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE). Since female grizzlies don't reproduce until they're at least 4 years old and only have litters of two to three cubs every three years or so, extinction loomed as a real possibility. Over time, though, those protections worked.

By 2007, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) scientists estimated the GYE population had quadrupled to more than 500 bears and expanded its range by more than 50 percent. This exceeded all federal recovery criteria, and the USFWS removed the Yellowstone grizzly population from threatened status. In short, the ESA functioned exactly as it was designed.

Of course, the story didn't end there. Environmentalists immediately sued, citing uncertainty regarding food sources. A judge agreed and returned them to fully protected status.

Subsequent research showed that the bears adapted well, overcame the *perceived* food challenges and continued to

grow in numbers and range. In 2017, citing an estimated population of 750 bears and further expansion of occupied range—again exceeding all delisting criteria—the Department of Interior removed grizzlies' threatened species status once more, returning management of the great bears to the three state wildlife agencies in the GYE.

Once again, a slew of environmental groups took their arguments to court. In 2018, a federal judge cited technicalities and ordered the population relisted again. The federal government and states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming intervened on behalf of delisting, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) and the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation filed a brief in support of delisting to the Ninth Circuit of Appeals. However, the court upheld the relisting decision in July 2020. In April 2021, biologists from both the USFWS and Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee revised the estimated grizzly population in the GYE to upwards of 1,000 bears. That's almost a tenfold increase from where the population stood when grizzlies were listed as threatened 46 years ago.



The delist-relist ping-pong is frustrating enough. But here's one more especially galling detail: you're paying for it.

Citing the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) in that most recent round of litigation, environmental groups filed requests to be reimbursed for "reasonable" attorney fees up to \$460 an hour. A few of those groups include the Alliance for Wild Rockies, Center for Biological Diversity, Humane Society of the United States, Sierra Club and WildEarth Guardians. The total combined ask amounted to more than \$1.4 million in taxpayer money.

LOOTING AGENCY FUNDING

Imagine discovering someone has been picking your pocket without you knowing about it. That scenario has played out time and time again in federal courts across the United States. It's a ploy successfully utilized by environmental groups that take advantage of the Equal Access to Justice Act. A measure created four decades ago to serve and benefit everyday Americans has been transformed into something far different.

Wealthy environmental groups use federal funding to pay for attorney fees in lawsuits against governmental agencies then direct the "reimbursements" into marketing campaigns and fundraising efforts.

To gain a better understanding of the EAJA, we must examine its roots, which date to the 1950s when Americans demanded governmental action for better stewardship of our nation's air, land and water. The Air Pollution Control Act (1955), Clean Air Act (1963) and Motor Vehicle Air Pollution Control Act (1965) were the first forays into environmental-protection policy. The 1970s saw the creation of the National Environmental Policy Act (1970) under President Richard Nixon, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Clean Water Act (1972) and Endangered Species Act (1973).

Those actions helped set the table for Congress to enact the Equal Access to Justice Act in 1980. It authorized the payment of "reasonable expenses of expert witnesses, the reasonable cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test or project which is found by the agency to be necessary for the preparation of the party's case, and reasonable attorney or



The USFWS and Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee estimate the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly population to be nearly 1,000 bears. This is far above federal recovery criteria, yet the grizzly remains listed under ESA due to taxpayer-funded lawsuits brought by anti-hunting groups.

agent fees” to a party that wins a civil lawsuit against a federal agency by successfully demonstrating a threat of injury or irreparable harm.

“EAJA was passed primarily in response to demands from the small business community, which was laboring under the increased environmental, consumer and health and safety regulations of the 1960s and 1970s,” said Lowell E. Baier, an attorney in Washington, D.C., and the author of the 2015 book *Inside the Equal Access to Justice Act: Environmental Litigation and the Crippling Battle Over America’s Lands, Endangered Species and Critical Habitats*. “The concern was that when an agency such as OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] or the EPA improperly fined a small business, the small business might win in court but be bankrupted by having to pay its lawyers.”

According to Baier, the intent behind the law has not changed much over the 41 years since its passage, but the nature of its use certainly has. The EAJA included a cap on the net worth of any person or company that may benefit from it to make sure it serves real needs. However, in the final stages of establishing the EAJA, a last-minute amendment opened the door for nonprofit organizations to use it regardless of their net worth. This distinction grew murkier after 1995, when Congress eliminated a provision requiring annual reports of expenditures under EAJA. This opened

the door for environmental groups to receive EAJA awards without the public ever realizing it.

“That set up a situation where environmental groups worth hundreds of millions of dollars could have their legal fees covered in cases where they used procedural laws like the National Environmental Policy Act to delay government projects they opposed for philosophical or political reasons. And in most cases, the money would be paid to the environmental group in a lump sum as part of a settlement agreement, with little if any oversight by the court, and then just disappear,” said Baier. “In theory, the law has a cap on fees, but that can be waived for lawyers with special expertise, such as in environmental law, when they’re paid market rates. We’ve documented numerous cases where payments were in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and even over a million dollars in some cases.”

Beginning in 2012, a bipartisan congressional effort required the Department of Interior to disclose EAJA payments, and the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act of 2019 permanently restored EAJA reporting throughout the entire federal government. Baier says this greatly reduced litigation from many organizations because they did not believe the negative publicity was worth the money. Still, such litigation does persist—with some groups continuing to thrive on it.

SUE, BRAG, PROFIT

Not only do litigant groups generate money from attorney fees, but they then use that financial windfall to bankroll large marketing campaigns to solicit more donations based on court cases.

“Environmental groups use the ESA, and challenges to decisions under the ESA, as incredibly effective fundraising tools,” said Pat Crank, former Wyoming attorney general and vice president of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, while testifying before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works in 2020. “They challenge any delisting of the GYE grizzly for reasons that ignore the amazing success story of the GYE bear recovery. Every challenge leads to millions of dollars pouring into their coffers.”

It’s a cycle that has repeated itself year after year. In 2012, a report compiled by the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee used data from the Department of Justice to show that the federal government defended more than 570 ESA-related lawsuits over a four-year period (2009 to 2012) which cost American taxpayers more than \$15 million in attorney fees. This occurred during a window when all the environmental groups mentioned above were especially active, including several that filed multiple lawsuits seeking to stop the state management of wolves in the northern Rockies.

“According to the Department of Justice, some attorneys were reimbursed up to \$500 an hour and two lawyers each received more than \$2 million in attorney fees from ESA cases,” the report stated. “This data provides further evidence that the ESA has become litigation driven, where money and resources are spent addressing endless, frivolous lawsuits instead of species recovery.”

Environmental organizations employ hundreds of attorneys on their collective staffs to constantly challenge ESA rulings, costing sportsmen and other taxpayers millions of dollars each year.



CONSERVATION DOESN'T HAPPEN IN COURTROOMS

Late in the 20th century and continuing into the 2000s, many Americans frowned upon environmental organizations due to their litigation-heavy reputation. Among the more notable offenders are the Alliance for the Wild Rockies (no attorney list on its website), Center for Biological Diversity (46 attorneys), Defenders of Wildlife (8 to 10 attorneys), Earthjustice (143 attorneys), Humane Society of the United States (“dozens” of attorneys), Sierra Club (legal staff of 104) and WildEarth Guardians (legal staff of 15). It comes as no surprise that these seven groups filed almost half of the more than 570 lawsuits in the 2012 report.

The Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) based in Tucson, Ariz., topped the 2012 report’s list of “most litigious organizations” with 117 ESA-related lawsuits. The CBD now proudly boasts a “Trump Tracker,” a listing of all 266 environmental lawsuits it filed against the U.S. government during the 1,461-day Trump administration. That equates to one new legal action filed every 5 1/2 days!

In one suit filed on June 27, 2019, the CBD called on the federal government to forcibly introduce grizzlies into Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Proposed release locations include the Grand Canyon, California’s Sierra Nevada and Montana’s Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem where there are already more than 1,000 grizzlies.

The transition to the Biden administration has not slowed this machine. In fact, it has accelerated. As of April 7, 2021, CBD publicly proclaimed it filed 43 lawsuits against the federal government—an average of one new legal action every 1.8 days!

To get an overarching picture of what is happening, the Administrative Conference of the United States, an independent federal agency that develops recommendations to improve administrative process and procedure, found 15 federal agencies paid more than \$58 million in awards of attorney’s fees and other expenses under EAJA during fiscal year 2019. Again, that \$58 million comes out of the pockets of America’s taxpayers.

STOLEN IDENTITIES

With so many lawsuits, some groups consciously shied away from the terms environmentalism or environmentalist and replaced them with conservation and conservationist. What is particularly vexing, and especially perplexing for the general public, is the hijacking of the word conservation by environmental groups. The CBD, for one, refers to itself as “a national, nonprofit conservation organization.” Others do the same, and many media outlets

further the confusion by often referring to environmental groups as conservation groups.

Merriam-Webster defines conservation as “planned management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction or neglect.” Conservation, then, is the hands-on stewardship of natural resources such as habitat enhancement and permanent protection of vital migration corridors and winter ranges.

Environmentalism on the other hand is “advocacy of the preservation of the natural environment.” Preservation often refers to a hands-off approach or preventing any type of management activity.


There are swaths of designated wilderness and other back-country areas that remain relatively untouched for very good reason. However, millions of acres of public forests are overly dense with heavy fuel loads and downed deadfall due to decades of fire suppression. These overgrown forests throttle the growth of grasses and forbs vital for elk and other wildlife, and are susceptible to disease, beetle kill and elevated risk of catastrophic wildfire that can decimate an ecosystem.

WHAT TRUE CONSERVATION LOOKS LIKE

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation’s mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat and our hunting heritage. The RMEF does so by working collaboratively with federal and state agencies as well as other partners to provide both funding and volunteer manpower to carry out prescribed

burning, forest thinning, noxious weed treatments, repairing or constructing wildlife water developments, fertilizations, planting seedlings and other actions to maintain or improve habitat for elk and other wildlife.

The RMEF also provides grant funding for wildlife management, scientific research and predator management. Additionally, the RMEF seeks to permanently protect and open access to elk winter and summer range, migration corridors and calving grounds via land acquisitions, access agreements and easements, conservation easements, land donations and other means. The RMEF also works to reestablish elk in historic ranges where habitat and cultural tolerance create a high potential for self-sustaining wild, free-ranging herds.

Any objective look at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation’s lifetime conservation accomplishments shows the immense impact the organization has had on elk, other wildlife and habitat. As of Jan. 1, 2021, RMEF conserved or enhanced more than 6.8 million acres of wildlife habitat and permanently protected 1.3 million acres of land. That amounts to more than 8.1 million acres of combined conservation work. On top of that, the RMEF played a pivotal role in restoring wild, free-ranging elk to Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Ontario, and the RMEF has invested millions of dollars to help fund wildlife research key to delivering the most effective management. All that adds up to a lot of work and a lot of conservation. 

As opposed to environmental preservationists who seek to fill their coffers through litigation, conservation groups such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation work to benefit wildlife through volunteer projects, land acquisitions and easements that enhance and protect vital habitat.



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BEARS OF THE BACKCOUNTRY



AN IDAHO HOUND HUNT FOR BEARS PROMISES ADVENTURE, INCREDIBLE DOG WORK AND AN EDUCATION IN THE SELECTIVE HARVEST OF BRUINS.

Text by Brian Lynn, Vice President, Marketing and Communications
Photos by Sam Soholt

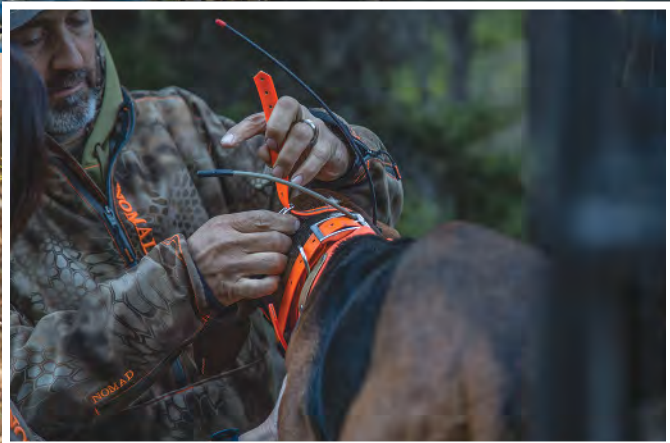


In 1996, animal-rights activists banned bear hunting with bait and hounds by ballot initiative in Washington state. Neighboring sportsmen in Idaho faced a similar fate, but their fellow citizens firmly rejected the anti-hunting measure.

Today, hounds still course the Idaho backcountry in pursuit of the state's abundant bear population. Watching and listening to a hound do what it was bred to do, demonstrating instinct and determination inherited from generations of its forebears, is something only a dog hunter can truly understand.

OPPOSITE: Excited hounds, athletes in every sense, keep a bear treed at the end of a long chase. ABOVE: Often lost in the conversation about bound hunting, even by hunters, is the ability to evaluate a treed bear.

However, the thrill of the chase, along with the ethical means of evaluating, aging and ensuring a treed bear doesn't have cubs, is still under attack. The Sportsmen's Alliance fights to protect sound wildlife management, the song of the hound regardless of the quarry, and the passions of dog men and women nationwide. We value and defend your hunting heritage. 🏹



Scott (above) and Angie Denny of Table Mountain Outfitters have run generations of Treering Walkers through Idaho's backcountry in pursuit of bears. A family affair, both Dennys, along with their children, have crisscrossed the 2.6 million-acre Boise National Forest with their packs. The mountainous area tends to produce smaller bears whose genetics favor color phases, with nearly 90 percent ranging from dark chocolate to blonde.



The Sportsmen's Alliance has taken media on the Denny's backcountry bear hunts. Even many outdoor-media folks don't understand how to answer anti-bound-hunting rhetoric. By taking them hunting, we can spend hours on the trail, around the campfire or in the bunkhouse educating them on the politics and ethics of the hunt while experiencing firsthand what running behind generations of well-trained and carefully cared-for bounds entails. In turn, they can educate their readers, viewers and followers.





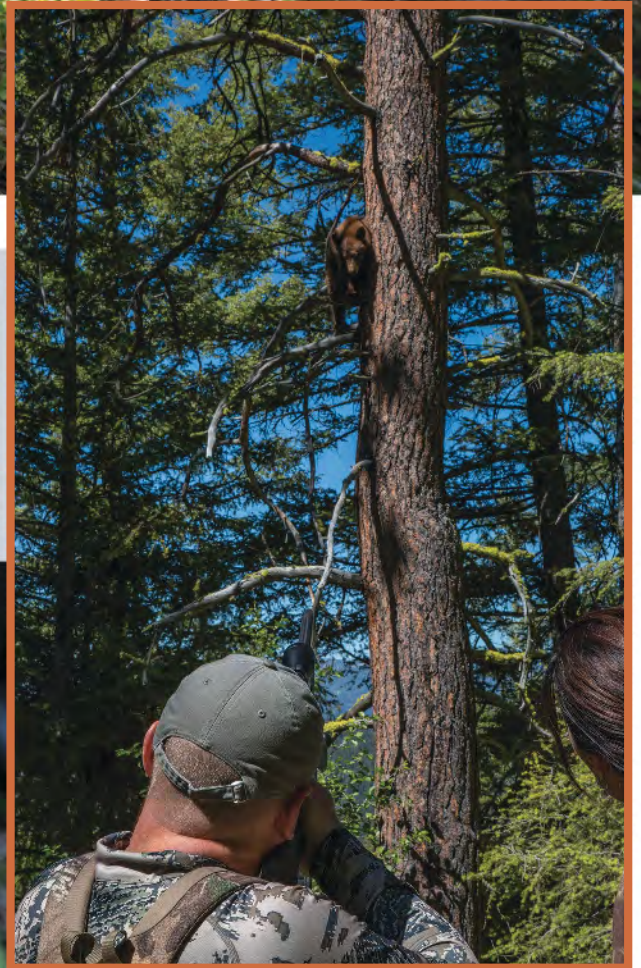
Gorgeous scenery, steep and deep, provides an incredible backdrop for the hunt and offers adventure with every chase. You never know where a bear will run nor where it'll tree. It could be 400 yards from the truck, or it could be hours later and miles away.

Garmin GPS units track the dogs and ensure their recovery where few roads exist. It can be difficult to hear bounds in the rough country, so handheld devices provide peace of mind.





The hounds will keep a bear treed until hunters arrive, regardless of how long that takes. Their enthusiasm for the hunt is undeniable for anyone who has witnessed it. When hunters do arrive, they never know what they'll find—a small bear, a sow with cubs or a big boar—but a treed bear allows time to look for cubs nearby, for evaluation of the animal and for unhurried, ethical shots should the hunter choose to take the bear. For most houndsmen, the thrill is in the chase, not in taking a bear.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Joe and Wendy Griffin, Michigan

A THIRD-GRADER'S PERSUASIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENT
CONVINCES HIS PETA-SUPPORTING MOTHER TO LET HIM TRY HUNTING
AND, 20 YEARS LATER, TO BECOME A HUNTER HERSELF.

Sportsmen's Alliance members have great stories to tell that speak to the success of conservation and their efforts to continue the traditions of hunting, trapping and fishing. We're proud to share those stories in these pages, as they demonstrate the commitment of citizen hunter-vegetationists. The Sportsmen's Alliance recently caught up with Joe Griffin and his mother Wendy to hear how Joe's passion for the outdoors influenced his mother in a profound way. The following is their story, in their words.

JOE: I first had an interest in hunting when in third grade. I would read *Field & Stream* magazines in our school library and, for whatever reason, elk hunting really just spoke to me. I had some friends that were into hunting, but I came from a very non-hunting family.

We had a persuasive writing project at school, and we were supposed to try to persuade our parents. I decided to

try to persuade my family to let me try hunting. My parents both ate meat but were very strong anti-hunters, my mom more than my dad. My mom was actually a member of PETA. I had to convince her that hunting is not just a means to an end of providing your own food, you're taking a more natural approach about it. When buying meat from the store, it could come from a large-operation farm where maybe that animal didn't have the quality of life that a wild one does.

It turned on a light for her, and she said, "Yeah, OK, maybe this isn't the worst thing in the world. I still don't like it, but I'll let you try it." I'm sure she thought it was going to be a fad I'd forget about in six months. That was more than 20 years ago. Now I work in the hunting industry. I travel all over the country hunting everything that I possibly can. I've got a 6-year-old son who is also extremely into hunting. Basically, our whole life revolves around it.

WENDY: Joe has always been able to pretty much get you to do anything he wants to do. He's very good with words. The thing that struck me, and I feel like my face probably just went completely blank, was when he pointed out, "You know, it'd be one thing, Mom, if you didn't eat meat, but you love meat. The meat that you eat might not have had a great life. Whereas the meat that I eat was living a happy life." I just couldn't argue with that.

I wouldn't look at the animals in the beginning. It just bothered me tremendously. I let him do his thing but said "keep it out of my sight." As time went on, and I could see how much it meant to him, I would agree to snap a picture of him with it and then to hang it in the backyard. Bit by bit it started bothering me less. I became proud of what he was doing and shared it on my social media with pictures.

Joe took me on a deer hunt eight years ago, and I told him I might not be able to



pull the trigger. As far as this deer hunt goes his timing was impeccable because I had just been sitting that very day talking about the price of meat and the price of food in general, and how we'd like to become more self-sustaining and grow a bigger garden. He happened to call shortly after our conversation and say, "Hey, what do you think about going deer hunting?" I said, "You know what? You hit me just at the right time. I'll give it a try."

It was our fourth or fifth try. I felt excited and hoped something would walk in so maybe I could actually do this. Sure enough, two does came into range. I pulled the trigger ... from what Joe tells me, it was a perfect hit. I didn't

have any feelings of, "Oh my gosh, what have I just done?" It was a feeling of excitement.

Part of the reason I agreed to do this interview is, I think probably 90 percent of people like myself who are anti-hunting (other than vegetarians) somehow just manage to not think of steaks or chicken breasts as an animal. I realized that they're every bit as much an animal as a deer. I have tasted Joe's deer, caribou, elk; it's some of the most delicious food I've ever tasted. Part of this, for me, is a feeling of responsibility that if I kill this deer, I'm going to learn to eat it. I feel confident I'll get there.

JOE: I was so proud of her. For me, it had come full-circle because she was there for so much of my hunting journey.

She was supportive of getting into calling contests; she was there for all the good-luck rituals the night before, like tying decoys in the kitchen. On top of that, my 6-year-old son was with us, and he was kind of the proud guide. He is extremely good for his age as a hunter and already has a nice buck of his own. He was super proud of the whole situation.

WENDY: I'm sure I'll go again. As soon as the freezer gets empty. 🏹



COURTESY OF JOE AND WENDY GRIFFIN (2)

MEMBER PHOTOS

FELLOW HUNTERVATIONISTS SHARE THEIR SUCCESS.



These kids spent the day at a rally at the Colorado capitol not only sharing their voices, but also learning about legislation and wildlife conservation. Proof that they are being raised right and that the future is bright for sportsmen and -women! Candace L. writes, “Two are mine, **SHERIDAN**, age 9, and **ODESSA**, 7. **ACEY**, 6, is my best friend’s. Mine are homeschooled so they hunt and ranch with us. Being outdoors with nature and wildlife is just a way of life for us, and we love it.”



ANTHONY R.: “I was in the middle of battling COVID, and I still went and caught beaver!”

RYAN F.: “Trapping. Simply put, it’s fun. It’s very social. It’s the ultimate game of hide-and-seek. Kids love it for that reason. We set these traps on Saturday, and my son Jaxon was up and dressed at 6 a.m. Sunday ready to go. I quote. ‘I put my warm clothes on, dad.’”

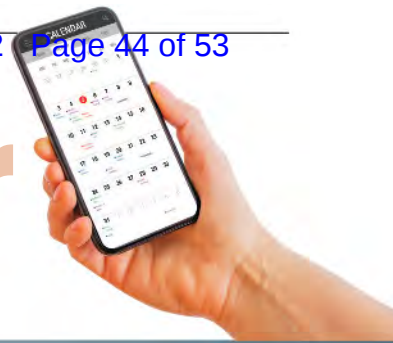


ERICK K.: “My son Oliver trapped his first coyote!”



RACHAE S.: “Not just a dog, her best friend! She’s done good.”

JESS W.: “My daughter Madison makes me proud every day with the passion she has for the outdoors. Her little brother and sister are following in her footsteps as well!”



Event Calendar

DON'T MISS OUT ON THESE GREAT TIMES AND PRIZES!

Join the Sportsmen's Alliance for exciting in-person events and profitable raffles with prizes that range from guns and ammo to trips around the world and serious cash! Check our website, follow us on social media, or contact the office at 614-888-4868 or info@sportsmensalliance.org for more information, to register or buy tickets! 🏹

MAY

Spring Fling Gun Bash

Join us May 21 at the Delaware County, Ohio, Fairgrounds, where we'll give away more than \$38,000 in cash and firearms! Entry is limited to 500 in-person guests, and each ticket includes live entertainment and all-you-can-eat barbecue. For those over 21, Anheuser-Busch will provide the beer. If you can't make it to the event, you can still win! An additional 4,500 tickets are available for those with other plans; you don't need to be present to win any of the cash, guns, 50/50 raffle or our brand-new hunting prize raffle! For more details, visit sportsmensalliance.org/2022springfling.

JUNE

Mini-MEGA Raffle

In partnership with the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, we're offering \$45,000 in cash and gun prizes. The raffle is limited to 2,500 tickets at \$50 each, but an unlimited 50/50 drawing at \$20 per ticket could put a projected \$75,000 in your pocket! Ticket sales started in April, and one prize per day will be given away in June! Go to MOMiniRaffle22.givesmart.com for more info.

25th Annual Northeast Sporting Clays Championship

June 18 will have the Sportsmen's Alliance in New Paltz, N.Y., for the Northeast Sporting Clays Championship hosted by Mid-Hudson Sporting Clays. Featuring our famous "Wall of Guns" raffle and a separate gear raffle, this event is always a blast! Your entry fee includes 100 targets, eye and ear protection, and a fabulous lunch. For the first time, targets will be registered with NSCA! To register, visit scorechaser.com and search "Sportsmen's Alliance."

JULY

Christmas in July Raffle

Ticket sales start in June and are limited to 2,500 at \$50 each with more than \$45,000 in cash and firearms prizes! There are also unlimited 50/50 tickets available for \$20 each. A gun or cash will be awarded each day in July! Presented in partnership with the Missouri Conservation Foundation.

AUGUST

MEGA Raffle 2022

We're shooting to provide a prize package of more than \$300,000, which will include hunting and fishing trips, vehicles, dozens of firearms, optics and much more! Ticket sales kick off in August and are limited to 10,000; every ticket enters you to win every prize! Unlimited 50/50 tickets push your chance to win even more; last year's haul was \$175,625!

SEPTEMBER

2022 Ohio Sporting Clays Invitational

In partnership with Whitetails Unlimited, this fun sporting clays shoot will take place at Cardinal Shooting Center in Marengo, Ohio. Stay tuned for more details!



IN MEMORIAM: DEDICATED SUPPORTERS PASS

THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE FAMILY MOURNS THE PASSING OF DEVOTED, LONG-TIME MEMBERS, SUPPORTERS AND COLLABORATORS.



GARY HARRINGTON joined the Sportsmen's Alliance in 1991 and was an avid hunter and outdoorsman from Michigan. He spent the fall seasons pursuing whitetail deer and all types of game birds. He recently lost his battle with pancreatic cancer.

Gary's wife, Marcia, remembers him as full of energy and life, a partner who believed in hard work and spending time together.

"He put so much energy into everything he did, and hunting was no exception. He had trail cameras on the property where he hunted. He checked them regularly and would often call me over to his computer to look at some-

thing interesting," she said. "One time, there were two bucks that looked like they were dancing together. They were on their hind legs and were obviously fighting over something. He loved to fill the freezer with venison every year. He always processed his own deer, and we packaged the meat together."

With his belief in responsibility, family and passing along the hunting heritage, Gary's family will remember him as a "regular guy" who loved his daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

"Gary believed in the right to bear arms and that we should know how to use a gun correctly. He believed in educating our youth about hunting and

gun safety. He would never back down from a political discussion,” said Marcia. “After he died, I gave his crossbow to his grandsons. They both got their first deer last year in Ohio with grandpa’s crossbow.”

Gary included a \$10,000 memorial gift to the Sportsmen’s Alliance in his estate planning. His gift will help defend the hunting heritage of his family and others for generations to come.

If you’d like to consider making a provision in your estate for the Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation, there are many gift options. Contact Aaron Carmichael, vice president of development for the Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation, at 614-888-4868 or acarmichael@sportsmensalliance.org to discuss those options and the impact you would like to make for all outdoorsmen and -women.



HOWARD ROBINSON was a longtime volunteer with the Sportsmen’s Alliance through our Trailblazer Program, as a local field director and a dear friend of our staff members. He was a dedicated

steward of the outdoors and had a driving passion for getting young people involved. The Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation nominated Howard for Outdoor Life magazine’s “Heroes of Conservation” award 10 years ago, which he was presented with at that year’s SHOT Show convention in Las Vegas.

Sportsmen’s Alliance staff have fond memories of Howard from a fishing trip in Arkansas a few years ago when he caught a prime catfish while jug fishing. Howard passed away doing what he loved—deer hunting. Moments after dropping a doe and calling a friend to come help, he passed peacefully, sitting in a chair in his ground blind, muzzleloader beside him. We know he is walking with us in the field, and we will carry on his legacy of conservation and mentorship here at the Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation.

The sportsmen’s community lost a stalwart of an advocate when **REP. DON YOUNG** (R-AK) died on March 18. For nearly 50 years, Young served as the sole representative for Alaska and a staunch defender of rural needs and traditions, the Second Amendment, hunting, fishing and trapping.

Young was a huge hunter whose hometown, Fort Yukon, straddled the Arctic Circle and for which he served as mayor in the 1960s. During the late ’70s and ’80s he always took the August recess to head up to his moose-hunting camp on the Porcupine and Sheenjek rivers.

Professionally, his defense of the outdoors was legendary, and he made his mark immediately when testifying against an anti-trapping bill with a foothold trap clamped to his hand. At one time he was the only licensed trapper in Congress.

Young was a defender of hunting on federal lands. He battled the Carter Administration over the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and the formation of new national parks that would close millions of acres to caribou, moose, brown bear and Dall sheep hunters. Instead, he pushed amendments that converted those lands from “park” status to “preserves,” the most notable redrawing within Wrangell-St. Elias National Park that protected crucial Dall sheep hunting areas. He was always there for

key wildlife issues and was a major force in the creation of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus in 1988-89.

“Don was a big bear of a guy. He wasn’t the most articulate or refined member of Congress, but he stuck by his principles and never backed away from a fight to defend what he thought was right—including fishing, hunting and trapping,” said Bill Horn, Sportsmen’s

Alliance legal counsel and collaborator with Young. “It was my great personal and professional fortune to have met him so many years ago, to have worked for him four years starting in 1977, and then to have worked with him for the following decades on issues we both cared about. It’s hard to believe he’s gone, but he cut a wide swath, made his mark and certainly will not be forgotten.”



COURTESY OF DON YOUNG, HOUSE.GOV (BOTTOM)

NEW FACES

AT SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

MEET THE MOST RECENT STAFFERS JOINING OUR BATTLES FOR CONSERVATION.

TODD ADKINS, Vice President of Government Affairs

After a lifetime spent in the outdoors and working professionally to protect and promote America's sportsmen and -women, Adkins has signed on to lead the Sportsmen's Alliance in our fight to protect hunting, fishing and trapping. His background includes years of policy advocacy with the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action, where he held many roles, including managing director of state affairs, state director and director of research. Having worked in Washington, D.C., and all 50 state capitals to advance the interests of hunters, anglers and trappers, Adkins also has an academic background in policy and political science.

After earning a law degree from the University of Iowa and building practical experience in politics, he returned to graduate school at the University of Notre Dame to focus on public opinion and voting behavior while earning a Ph.D. Having grown up in a rural area of Michigan, his personal passions revolve around the outdoors generally, but he's particularly die-hard about waterfowl hunting. So much so that after graduating high school, he moved to Maryland's Eastern Shore to become a full-time waterfowl guide.



COURTNEY NICOLSON, Associate Director of Communications

Nicolson has joined the Marketing and Communications team at Sportsmen's Alliance. Her career in the hook-and-bullet industry spans more than a decade, with much of that time spent at Outdoor Sportsman Group as senior producer. While taking the reins of social media, Nicolson has jumped right in, working on an overhaul of the website, e-commerce, business-partner coordination and overall communication strategy. As a seasoned outdoor writer with articles published in numerous magazines, including *Delta Waterfowl* and *Wildfowl*, and digital articles for *Guns & Ammo* and *Personal Defense World*, she will contribute heavily to *The Sportsmen's Advocate*.

She was recently appointed to *The Outdoor Wire's* Voices of Leadership Panel, and every fall helps mentor a youth girls' pronghorn hunt in Wyoming organized by the Sisterhood of the Outdoors. As a hunter-education instructor and mentor, she believes that anyone of any age can create a new hunting heritage. Nicolson resides on the south shore of Boston, Mass., and spends her free time bluefin tuna fishing and hauling lobster pots in the summer, and chasing grouse and woodcock in the fall with her two English setters, Whimsy and Piper.



DILLON BARTO, Manager State Services

A graduate of Bowling Green State University with a double major in history and classical civilizations, Barto has spent the last three years in the Ohio House of Representatives in a variety of roles, including as legislative service commission fellow to the House Majority Policy Team, legislative aide and the clerk of the House State and Local Government Committee. While in the House, he proudly worked on a multitude of Second Amendment issues in order to preserve our right to bear arms—a passion he strongly believes in protecting. As a member of the Government Affairs department and lifelong outdoorsman, Barto is excited to advocate for firearm rights, hunting, fishing and trapping throughout all 50 states.





PROGRESS REPORT

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING

CONSERVATION SCIENCE IS OFF TO AN INSPIRING START!


As the 2021-22 school year wrapped up, so too did the inaugural year of Conservation Science, a Sportsmen's Alliance-created curriculum for high-school students. The first year of instruction saw our science curriculum successfully taught to nearly 2,000 students in 71 schools across five states.

"We couldn't have asked for a better first year. Teachers and students both loved the class," said Calvin Vander Boon, director of Conservation Adventures. "Our turnkey curriculum makes it easy for science teachers to implement the class and gives them all the tools and resources to effectively teach Conservation Science. The hands-on, project-based nature of the class engages students and keeps them interested in learning."

Conservation Science, the first step in our larger Conservation Adventures program, educates high-school students on the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation through core and elective courses in public, private, charter and home schools. It's completely flexible to serve the needs of a

school or teacher, working as a year-long or semester standalone course, or as a supplement to an existing science or agriculture-science class.

Students in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Kentucky and Indiana engaged in lessons and labs that taught scientific principles through conservation and wildlife management, as well as the role sportsmen play in the North American Model. Guest speakers included game wardens, biologists, local trappers, culinary specialists and arborists. Students built gravity feeders and set trail cameras to capture images of local wildlife; they also learned to shoot archery equipment, to kayak, canoe and cast fly rods. Some even started the permitting process for building a nature trail behind their school.

The resounding success of Conservation Science continues as more schools pick up the class for the 2022-23 school year. If you know school administrators or teachers who would be interested in adopting the class or learning more, have them contact James McChesney at SA headquarters: info@sportsmensalliance.org or 614-888-4868. 

"I thought this would be my least favorite class; it ended up being my favorite class. It was eye-opening and interactive."

"What really surprised me about the course was how in-depth it was. When I started this class, my knowledge of conservation only extended to not hunting animals when they were endangered or threatened."

I had no idea it actually involved hunting, trapping and research beyond just the number of animals in an area."

GEAR GUIDE

LOOK NO FURTHER TO FIND TOP EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR NEXT HUNTING TRIP OR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE, ALL OFFERED BY SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE BUSINESS PARTNERS.



KERSHAW LONEROCK RBK 2 ▲

Knife sharpening is a time-honored skill, but when you are halfway through skinning an elk deep in the backcountry there is nothing like snapping in a fresh blade in seconds. The RBK 2 from Kershaw is the newest upgraded design in the company's line of replaceable-blade knives. It comes with 15 blades and a "buddy" handle. This slim, extra handle holds an RBK 2 blade so that both you and your buddy can take on the skinning task—to get the job done quicker. MSRP: \$59.99; kershaw.kaiusa.com

HORNADY SECURITY RAPID SAFE KEYPAD VAULT ▶

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COURTESY OF LEUPOLD (TOP)



FIOCCHI GOLDEN TURKEY ▶

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and compact do-it-all rangefinder for both archers and riflemen. Featuring a cutting-edge DNA laser engine and Range/Wind technology, you can easily calculate ranges up to 1,500 yards on extreme terrain. Lightweight, waterproof, the unit is ready for your next adventures. MSRP: \$299.99;



◀ **SAVAGE 110 ULTRALITE**

At 6 pounds and less, the 110 Ultralite is designed for lightweight toughness from the stock to the PROOF Research carbon-fiber-wrapped, stainless steel barrel. Savage's AccuFit technology with adjustable length of pull and comb height provides all hunters with optimum fit and performance. The user-adjustable AccuTrigger allows crisp, clean shots to close out successful hunts. With eight chamberings to choose from, and now in left-hand and camo options, this is the gun you've been waiting for. MSRP: \$1,649; savagearms.com

GARMIN INREACH MINI 2 ▶

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INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 tsp. sesame oil
- 2 c. smoked wild turkey breast, diced
- 1/2 c. carrot, peeled and finely diced
- 1/2 c. celery, finely diced
- 3 tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tbsp. orange juice concentrate
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 green onions, minced
- 1/2 c. water chestnuts, diced
- 2 tbsp. pickled ginger, minced (or 1 tbsp. fresh gingerroot, peeled and minced)
- 1 1/2 c. cooked rice, white or brown
- 2 to 3 heads iceberg lettuce
- sriracha sauce
- hoisin sauce

ON THE TABLE

TRY THIS RECIPE FOR SMOKED WILD TURKEY LETTUCE CUPS FROM THE SPORTING CHEF SCOTT LEYSATH.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat olive oil and sesame oil in a large wok or skillet over medium-high heat. Add turkey and stir-fry for 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add carrot and celery, and stir-fry for 3 minutes more. Add soy sauce and next six ingredients. Cook until warmed throughout.

3. Transfer mixture into four bowls and serve with lettuce cups, sriracha and hoisin sauces. To enjoy, spread a very thin layer of hoisin sauce on the center of a lettuce cup. Spoon a few tablespoons of the turkey mixture into the lettuce, and add a drop or two of sriracha for spicy heat. Hold the lettuce cup firmly, and eat from one end to the other.

NOTES

While you can prepare this recipe with raw (not smoke-flavored) wild turkey breast fillets, a mild smoke really does make it mo betta. We soak our breast fillets in a brine of 1 qt. water and 1/4 c. garlic salt. Then, they go into a 150- to 160-degree smoker for 2 hours before

cooling and dicing. If you prepare the dish with raw fillets, stir-fry the diced meat for 5 minutes during the first step.

It takes a little practice to turn a head of iceberg lettuce into a pile of lettuce cups that won't fall apart when filled and eaten. At the store, look for the lightest heads

with the loosest leaves. Start by cutting the stem and core away from the head with a sharp knife. From the stem end, remove each leaf. If desired, trim the ragged ends of the cups with kitchen shears.

For more wild-game recipes, visit sportingchef.com. 



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EXHIBIT 3

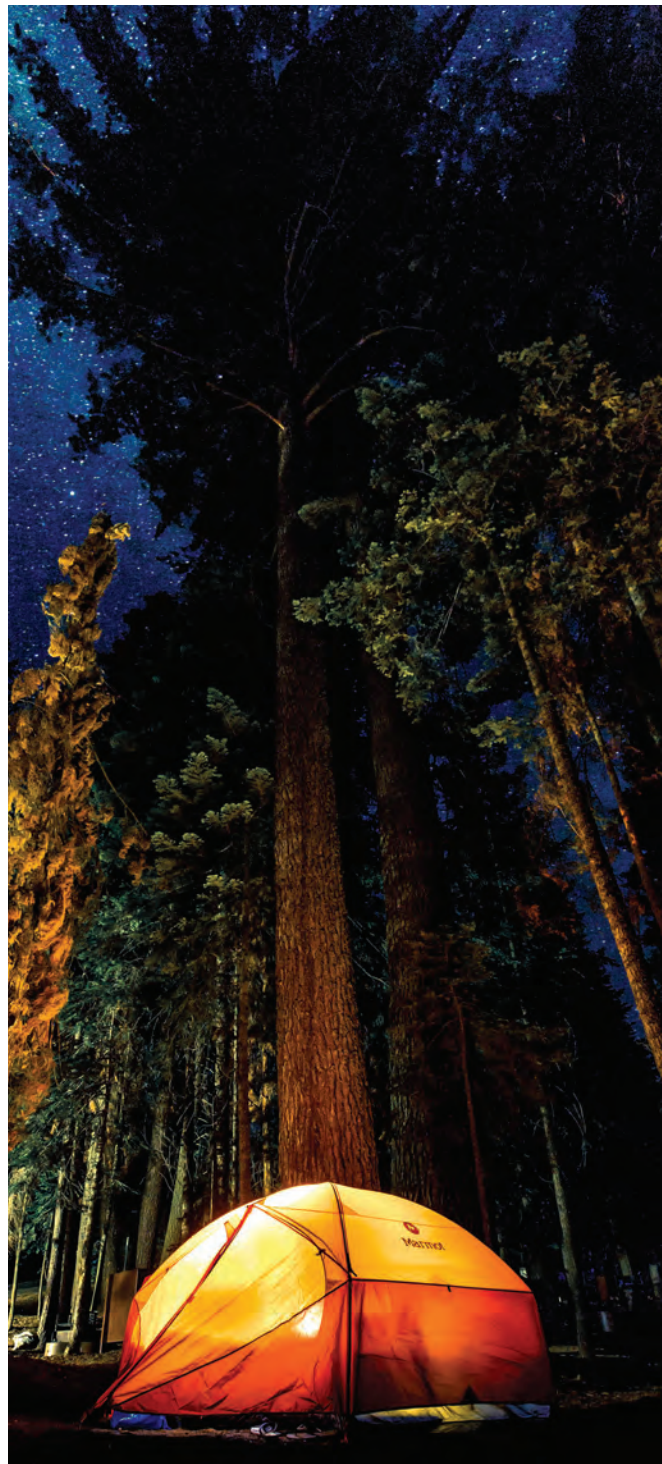


CONSERVATION ADVENTURES

TAKING STUDENTS INTO NATURE, BRINGING NATURE INTO THE CLASSROOM

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STUDENT-LED, STUDENT-CENTRIC ADVENTURES ...



THAT FOCUS ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE RECREATION ...



AND EDUCATES STUDENTS THROUGH HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES ...



THAT INSTILL A PASSION AND SUPPORT FOR THE OUTDOORS.

AS AN IMPORTANT INITIATIVE OF THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE FOUNDATION, CONSERVATION ADVENTURE CLUBS ARE SUPPORTED BY DECADES OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE INTRODUCING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES TO THE OUTDOORS. THE FOUNDATION SUPPORTS THE CLUB EFFORTS BY PROVIDING GEAR, CONNECTIONS TO LOCAL CONSERVATION-BASED ACTIVITIES, FUNDRAISING SUPPORT, VOLUNTEER NETWORKS AND MORE!



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(calvin@sportsmensalliance.org)
AT 614-888-4868**

Conservation Outdoor Adventures an initiative of



FOUNDATION

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Phone: 614-888-4868

Support for this project was made available through a partnership with the Ohio Division of Wildlife utilizing funds from the Wildlife Restoration program.



EXHIBIT 4

SPORTSMEN'S MONTHLY

CONSERVATION ADVENTURES



TAKING A NEW APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM, THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE LAUNCHES A YOUTH PROGRAM IN A PLACE WHERE KIDS MEET EVERY DAY - THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

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WHAT'S INSIDE



7 BUILDING A NEW YOUTH ADVENTURE

Taking a new approach to an old problem, the Sportsmen's Alliance has launched a youth program to recruit the next generation in a place where they meet every day ... at school!

3 A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT A word from Sportsmen's Alliance President and CEO Evan Heusinkveld.

4 IS A CHARITABLE GIFT A GOOD INVESTMENT? If these three conditions are met, and if it has an impact on your quality of life, then yes!

5 THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS! Industry leaders and non-profit partners form an Alliance fighting for your hunting rights nationwide.

12 COYOTE ATTACKS TODDLER A rabid coyote terrorizes a Connecticut town as lawmakers try to end management methods.

14 VICTORY! TWO STATES STEP UP FOR FAMILIES AFIELD West Virginia and South Dakota expand their Families Afield offerings.

15 BILL EQUATES TAXIDERMY AND MANSLAUGHTER Own African taxidermy in this state and you could face prison time.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

MESSAGE

Unless you've been social distancing for the last 5 to 10 years, you know the hunting community faces a crisis of generational proportion. As Baby Boomers age out of participating in the outdoors and purchasing hunting licenses and equipment, and with society shifting more towards urban living and away from any connection with their food sources, the North American Model of Conservation has suffered - and faces catastrophe in the near future.

As an industry, we've known this for quite some time. Every organization, the Sportsmen's Alliance included, has tried to stem the tide by introducing youth programs to recruit and retain "the next generation." The problem with this is, of course, that most of the kids

participating in these activities are the children of hunters, anglers, trappers and shooters. We're recruiting from an ever-shrinking funnel. At best we are replacing ourselves; at worst, not even that.

It is vital that we reach not just kids with a desire to hunt, but those who don't even know that hunting, fishing, trapping and shooting are legitimate recreational options.

To that end, the Sportsmen's Alliance has launched a program that will reach kids while they're still developing interests and forming opinions about social norms - and we'll do it where they congregate daily: at school.

Conservation Adventures was designed specifically to use the existing high-school club system (think: Key Club, Speech/Debate, FFA)

to give any interested high school student the chance to participate in fun activities that directly support, and fund, conservation. The peer-recruited clubs will educate kids on the North American Model of Conservation through participation in outdoor events that they can then replicate on their own.

Only by engaging them on their turf, and through their friends, can we hope to recruit kids who aren't affiliated with the outdoors into our world.

We will lean heavily on all of our local and national partners to help educate and introduce these kids to the vast array of opportunities available to them, which, of course, opens their eyes to all the great work various organizations contribute nationwide. You can read more about the need for



such a program and how it will work in this month's feature.

We're excited to launch this generational endeavor, and look forward to expanding it outside of Ohio, where we've already started a couple of clubs, and eventually reaching high school kids in every state.

Sincerely,

Evan Heusinkveld
President and CEO

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IS A CHARITABLE GIFT A GOOD INVESTMENT?
YES, WHEN THESE THREE THINGS OCCUR

Usually, when we think of a good investment, different things may come to mind. Perhaps it's a piece of property. Perhaps it's a piece of art or certain stocks. Maybe it's an education, an 18-month CD, a classic car, an antique gun or fill in the blank with your favorite. The truth is, most of us have been burned at some point on one of these "guaranteed" good investments. In this world of fluctuating markets, recessions and global financial crises, there is no such thing as a guaranteed return on your investment.

So how can a charitable gift be a good investment? The answer is a bit complex. This investment isn't any less valuable or important than any other you've made in your life, and usually much less risky. To begin,

any charitable gift to a nonprofit is considered a good investment if three things occur: if 75 percent or more of each dollar donated goes to mission expenses; and if the mission of the organization *is* a worthy cause and *is* being accomplished. In short, if a nonprofit organization does what it says it does, does it effectively, and does it with the least amount of overhead costs, then it is a good investment. We would also contend that if this mission has a direct impact on the quality of your life, then it is a GREAT return on your investment.

The Sportsmen's Alliance hits all three of these markers. Over 80 percent of all dollars donated to the Sportsmen's Alliance goes directly to our core mission. No other organization

can claim the success that Sportsmen's Alliance has had in accomplishing its mission in the court room, the legislature and at the ballot box. And finally, YOU are impacted personally by this success. In 2019 alone, over 500 hunting-related bills were introduced in 41 states. The Sportsmen's Alliance engaged in many of these bills, and preserved and expanded your opportunities afield.

Please continue to invest in the Sportsmen's Alliance and our efforts to fight on your behalf. Your gifts give us the resources necessary to stop these radical anti-hunting groups. You can give by going to our website (sportsmensalliance.org) or contacting Aaron Carmichael at 317-910-1966 or acarmichael@sportsmensalliance.org.

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CONSERVATION ADVENTURES



TAKING A NEW APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM, THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE LAUNCHES A YOUTH PROGRAM IN A PLACE WHERE KIDS MEET EVERY DAY - THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

**BY BRIAN LYNN,
VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

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AS HUNTING PARTICIPATION WANES, CONSERVATION AND THE ENTIRE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL IT'S BUILT UPON BEGIN TO CRUMBLE. THAT MEANS ACCESS AND MAINTENANCE OF EVERYTHING FROM BOAT LAUNCHES TO TRAILS SUFFER, AND THAT ENFORCEMENT, ENHANCEMENT AND BIOLOGICAL STUDIES GO UNFUNDED. ULTIMATELY, INDIVIDUAL HABITATS, SPECIES AND ENTIRE ECOSYSTEMS PAY THE PRICE.

THE IMPACT THAT SPORTSMEN HAVE PLAYED IN THE STORY OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CANNOT BE OVERSTATED. FROM THE CREATION OF NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES, TO THE RESTORATION EFFORTS OF COUNTLESS CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR VOLUNTEERS, TO THE ADOPTION OF OUR PUBLIC TRUST MODEL, AMERICAN SPORTSMEN HAVE LED

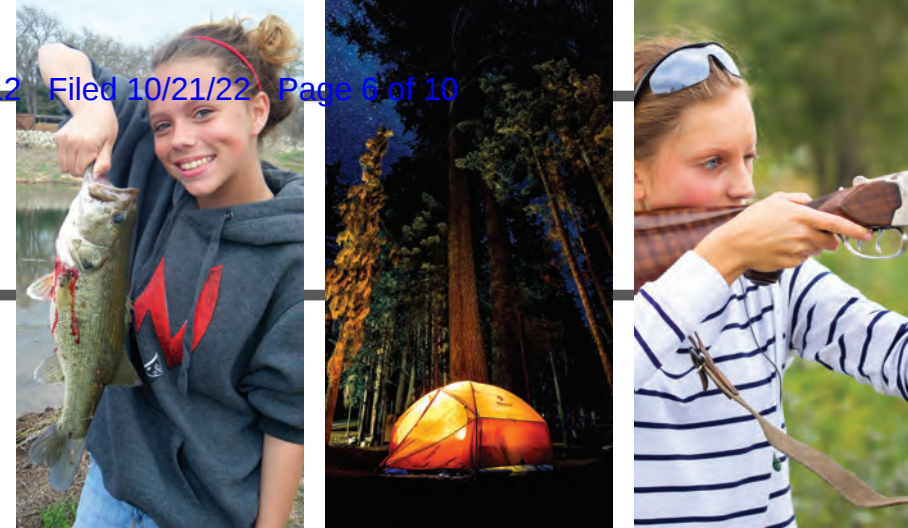
the charge at every step. Today, we face what could be the greatest conservation challenge of our lifetime. Most people today don't know the story of how wildlife in our country came to be so abundant.

True conservationists know that wildlife simply doesn't exist by accident. And yet, much of the general public is uninformed about issues of wildlife conservation. This lack of knowledge has become one of the great challenges of the North American Model of Conservation. The model's pragmatic emphasis on anglers and hunters paying for conservation requires that, for there to be effective conservation, we need an active and thriving sportsman's community. This vital relationship between conservation and sportsmen is holding less weight with the non-hunting public today, which fails to see or appreciate the value conferred on the public by the sporting community.

Only about five percent of Americans 16 years old and older actually hunt, about half of what hunted 50 years ago, and that number is expected to continue to decline. Meanwhile, other outdoor wildlife activities like birdwatching, hiking and photography have rapidly grown. Although these are worthwhile activities, it is also leading to a crisis as these don't generate the much needed conservation revenue that sportsmen activities generate. More than 75 percent of all conservation dollars come through hunting and fishing. If the decline in participation of field sports continues, it will imperil our ability to protect natural resources and will strike a significant blow to wildlife management in all corners of our great nation.

This is amplified by the mass migration of people to urban settings over the past 50 years. Lost in this shuffle are our connections to food sources, and the rural lifestyle. This shift is evidenced in the precipitous decline in hunting license sales that has taken place, and still is occurring today. Over the past 25 years, the number of hunting license buyers has fallen by more than 18 percent. However, that

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With an emphasis on fishing, hunting, trapping and shooting, high school kids will enjoy the outdoors with friends while learning how they're helping entire ecosystems and wildlife.

doesn't tell the whole story. During that same period, the country's population has expanded significantly, meaning hunters and anglers make up a much smaller proportion of the nation today. In fact, while license buyers have dipped by 18 percent, license buyers as a percentage of the overall population is down almost 40 percent.

It's an issue the industry has worked to rectify for years, with various organizations implementing youth memberships, programs and days afield, including the Sportsmen's Alliance. The advent of online hunter education courses has made it more convenient to get certified and afield than ever before. The Sportsmen's Alliance, along with our partners at the National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and National Rifle Association, have worked for 14 years to reduce those entrance barriers even further by passing apprentice or mentored hunting laws in 41 states - allowing a new sportsman to hunt under the direct supervision of a licensed hunter. That program has allowed more than 2.4 million new hunters to experience the thrill of the outdoors!

YET THE DECLINE PERSISTS.

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Today, our country's shifting demographic requires new thought be given to the future of wildlife management, our approach to educating the public and how we're recruiting the next generation.

If we're going to stem the decline in participation, we must expand the boundaries of our efforts and look at nontraditional recruitment vehicles.

We must capture the attention of the next generation in their learning and formative years, providing critical education about effective wildlife conservation and the vital link sportsmen play in this process. To accomplish this, the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation is launching a bold new program, Conservation Adventures, to reach American youth both in the classroom and through after school club programs.

TAKING STUDENTS INTO NATURE, BRINGING NATURE INTO THE CLASSROOM

The Conservation Adventure Program is not the typical Recruitment, Retention or Reactivation program operating largely on the labor of volunteer organizations. Unlike other programs, the Sportsmen's Alliance is taking a unique approach with the Conservation Adventures program to the meet challenges facing hunting and wildlife conservation. This program delivers conservation education to high school students directly through the place they congregate the most - school.

Conservation Adventures is a school-based, extracurricular club (much like Key, Speech/Debate, FFA or even sports activities) that offers conservation-based events, activities and education to high school students. The program is designed to attract students who already have an interest in the outdoors, as well as those who want to experience the adventure of the outdoors but lack the resources or knowledge to get involved.

The goal is to build a network of extra-curricular clubs in local high schools throughout the United States

THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

HANDS-ON OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES IN HIGH SCHOOL



Student-led, student-centric adventures that support wildlife management and sustainable recreation ...



While educating students in the classroom so they understand, respect and develop a passion for the outdoors and conservation.



Conservation Adventures will introduce the next generation to the outdoors using the existing high school club system...



to provide hands-on hunting, fishing and recreational shooting opportunities that instill a passion and support for the outdoors.

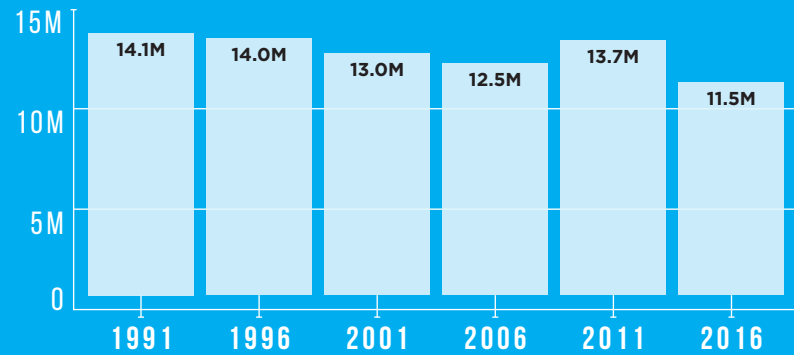




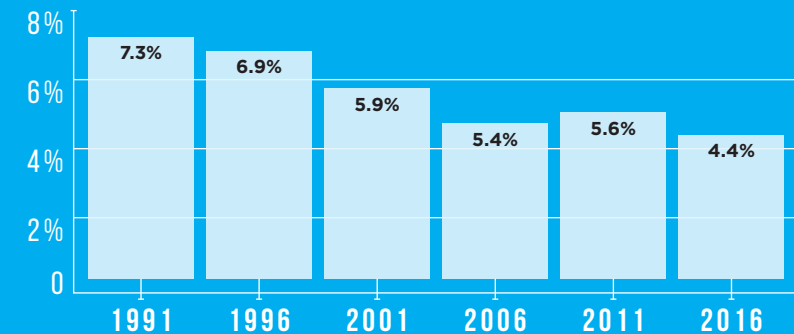
GENERATIONAL CRISIS: FEWER AMERICANS HUNTING

According to a national survey that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducts every five years, fewer people are hunting, even as our population rises.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO HUNT



SHARE OF ADULT POPULATION WHO HUNTS



NOTES: Numbers include anyone who went hunting at least once that year. Adult population includes people aged 16 and older.

SOURCE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Census Bureau

Credit: Hillary Fung and Katie Park/NPR

that provide opportunity for students to participate in outdoor activities. These clubs, mentored by advisors, will introduce students to the North American Model of Conservation and the role hunting, fishing and trapping play in sustaining habitats and wildlife.

The club involves an educational element, but the primary focus is hands-on outdoor activities, such as multiple forms of hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, various safety instruction and certification, as well as habitat restoration, camping, kayaking and more. In all, students receive a well-rounded introduction to these pursuits and the underlying outdoor ethos that supports them; they will come to understand the environmental cause and effect of these activities, and the important role that the North American model plays, and has played, throughout the history of conservation.

To accomplish this, the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation is partnering with other youth-serving organizations to provide educational and activity offerings. Using the existing "student club" structure in schools, we can provide conservation education and activities to scale this program quickly.

As an initiative of the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation, Conservation Adventures is backed by decades of experience introducing children and families to the outdoors. The foundation supports the club efforts by providing gear, connections to local conservation-based organizations and events, fundraising support and a volunteer network, as well as equipment loans, scholarships and advisor and volunteer training.

If we don't turn the tide of falling participation in hunting, conservation suffers and the entire North American model of funding comes undone, and not only do sportsmen lose, but so does nature. The Sportsmen's Alliance, as it has for four decades, will fight to protect hunting, fishing, trapping and recreational shooting in courts and legislatures nationwide, at the ballot box, and now in the public school system. ■

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By engaging kids in fun activities that support conservation, we hope to educate students on the role of sportsmen in nature.



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LEGISLATIVE BLOCK

STATUS OF PENDING LAWS

VICTORY! WASHINGTON “PAIN AND SUFFERING” DOG BILL AMENDED TO PROTECT SPORTSMEN, DOG OWNERS

The Sportsmen’s Alliance, Washington sportsmen, agriculture and canine-advocacy groups worked to remove language in Senate Bill 6300 that would have equated the experience of human pain to that of animal pain as part of a new definition of animal cruelty. The bill would have defined pain as “a state of physical or emotional distress that may range from dull distress to agony. It is generally assumed that if an experience is physically painful for a human being, it is also painful for an animal.”

Working with a coalition of sportsmen and agriculture groups, the Sportsmen’s Alliance and its partners persuaded legislators to strip the language that could have easily been applied to common training practices involving hunting dogs, such as tethering, the use of electronic collars and

other common practices associated with hunting. The final version of Senate Bill 6300, which has been sent to the governor’s desk, clarifies truly heinous animal-cruelty crimes.

“The original Senate Bill 6300 would have equated how all animals, from a newborn kitten to one-ton buffalo, experience mental, physical and physiological pain or suffering to that of the human experience,” said Jacob Hupp associate director of state services at the Sportsmen’s Alliance. “We’re grateful to our Washington members and partners, and to Sen. Ann Rivers and Rep. Tina Orwall, for working with us to protect sportsmen and the use of dogs for field trials and hunting.”

The Alliance will continue our efforts to track, monitor and work to defeat legislation that intentionally or consequently impacts sportsmen’s rights.



COYOTE ATTACKS TODDLER AS NEW HAMPSHIRE LEGISLATORS PUSH BANS

As New Hampshire legislators prepared to debate Sen. David Watters Senate Bill 588, which would ban coyote-hunting contests, as well as any other contest involving wildlife, and Rep. Kathryn Stack’s legislation, House Bill 1504, which would establish a committee to study a ban on recreational trapping, a rabid coyote attacked three people in the state.

According to multiple reports, a 62-year-old woman and her three dogs were chased by the coyote, with the woman and dogs being bitten before slamming the canine’s head in the door of her house. The coyote then went after a car on the road. Finally, the rabid coyote attacked a toddler walking suburban trails with its family near the edge of town. The father was forced to kill the animal with his bare hands.

“It’s ridiculous that Sen. Watters and Rep. Stack would bring forth bills that would further handcuff wildlife biologists and wildlife management practices when there are rabid coyotes attacking citizens in their own homes,” said Bruce Tague, vice president of government affairs for Sportsmen’s Alliance.

“Removing methods and means of controlling growing numbers of invasive species of predators in New Hampshire is a direct threat

to the state’s people, pets and livestock. If passed, you can expect to see more rabies and more attacks.”

SB 588 is part of a national trend started by animal-rights groups, such as the Humane Society of the United States, to ban any contest involving wildlife.

Current New Hampshire law allows for wildlife contests, such as big buck competitions and sporting dog field trials, to legally take place in the state. Under this broadly written bill, nearly any organized hunting that involves two or more people, where even only a ribbon is awarded, would be a criminal act.

The new language in SB 588 would charge any person or organization involved in a contest with a B-level misdemeanor, which carries a fine up to \$1,200. Additionally, SB 588 would outlaw nearly any competition related to hunting, including hunt tests and field trials for sporting dogs, as prizes are often awarded to the winners of such competitions. eliminates the system through which superior genetics, bloodlines and abilities are put to the test.

Fortunately, the Alliance and our allies protected sportsmen by killing Rep. Stack’s bill and removing the contest language from Sen. Watters’ bill.

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AFRICAN GAME BANS INTRODUCED IN TWO STATES

In 2018, **California** Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed legislation that would have banned the possession and importation of African Species. State Senator Henry Stern has introduced a similar bill that would once again try to enact this prohibition. Senate Bill 1175 would ban products from a number of species, including: African elephants, lions, leopards, rhinoceros, giraffe, zebra, hippos and hyena. Anyone who violates this new law would be subject to a civil penalty up to \$40,000 for each instance. Senate Bill 1175 is awaiting a committee referral.

Senate Bill 1175 punishes law-abiding sportsmen by preventing them from possessing any part of these animals, including taxidermy, which were or would be lawfully hunted and imported under federal law and in conjunction with sustainable African conservation plans approved by international law.

Under current law, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issues import permits for hunts that occur in countries that maintain sound conservation policies that help improve threatened and endangered wildlife.

SB 1175 would ban the possession of these species parts, including taxidermy, even if they were imported and possessed before the bill was enacted, unless evidence of every piece presented. The ban could even apply to transporting taxidermy through California, and penalties could be charged per violation – meaning if you had taxidermy of a lion, leopard, zebra and hyena, you would face a \$160,000 fine.

Legislation defeated by sportsmen’s groups in 2019 that would have banned possession of African hunting trophies has been reintroduced in **Connecticut**. House Bill 5104 would ban the importation, sale and possession of African elephants, black and white rhinoceros, lions, leopards and giraffes. Violators would receive the same penalties as someone convicted

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of manslaughter, which is subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and up to two years in jail.

Based on the legislation, even if you adhere to all federal laws by obtaining the necessary legal permits to hunt or import one of these trophy animals, you would still be charged with a felony that carries penalties equal to that of killing a human. In order to hunt African big game, you are required to obtain the proper hunting permits from the country you are hunting, as well as the proper approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to import the meat or taxidermy into the United States.

“Legislation like this does nothing to improve the lives of U.S. citizens, Africans or the species listed, and would be nearly impossible to enforce,” said

Jacob Hupp, Sportsmen’s Alliance associate director of state services. “Unfortunately, this legislation does the most damage to the African villages and the very species that rely on funding and social and economic incentives to survive.”

African big-game hunting funds efforts that protect plentiful, threatened and endangered species from poaching and gives local communities incentive to tolerate conflict with them. These hunts occur within the scope of the law of African countries and adhere to United States import regulations. The dollars that come from African hunts provide a lifeline for many endangered and threatened species as they fund the anti-poaching and conservation efforts throughout Africa that would not be possible otherwise.



LEGISLATIVE BLOCK

STATUS OF PENDING LAWS



VICTORY! TWO STATES EXPAND FAMILIES AFIELD LEGISLATION

The Sportsmen’s Alliance and our partners have worked hard to help more states pass Families Afield legislation, or to expand that legislation in states which already have it, in order to recruit new hunters. We’re happy to announce that two states have expanded their offerings for sportsmen.

West Virginia House Bill 4523, which allows newcomers to purchase an apprentice hunting or trapping license for an unlimited number of years, unanimously passed the House and was signed into law by Gov. Jim Justice.

South Dakota House Bill 1095, which allows new hunters to be mentored by an experienced mentor who has completed a hunter safety course even if they are not residents of South Dakota, unanimously passed the House and was signed into law by Gov. Kristi Noem.

Apprentice hunting licenses are the cornerstone of the Families Afield program, an initiative led by the Sportsmen’s Alliance, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, National Rifle Association and the Congressional Sportsmen’s

Foundation. The program has successfully championed mentored hunting laws in 41 states since its inception in 2005, and has resulted in more than 2.4 million apprentice licenses sold.

“Mentored hunters are proven to be safer in the field and more likely to take their hunter education course and become regularly licensed hunters if they are given the opportunity to hunt under apprentice licenses for several years,” said Jacob Hupp, associate director of state services at the Sportsmen’s Alliance.

VERMONT BILL ATTACKS FISH & GAME BOARD, BEAR HUNTING



Vermont Senators tried to add severe restrictions on bear hunting to unrelated legislation and to create a separate governing panel to recommend wildlife policy changes that prioritize the needs of people who do not hunt, fish or trap.

Senate Bill 321 would have made bear hunting with hounds impossible.

The language would have banned a person from hunting bears for five years if they lost sight of a dog, allowed a hunting dog to get beyond 528 feet away or allowed one or more of their dogs on a property without prior written permission. Second time offenders would have lost their bear hunting rights for life, an unprecedented penalty for minor

offenses in Vermont wildlife law. The bill also reduced the dog-training season to just two weeks and moved those two weeks into what is now bear hunting season.

In addition, SB 321 would have created the *Vermont Working Group on Wildlife Governance* to recommend changes in wildlife policy to the state legislature. The working group would have reviewed current wildlife policy to ensure they meet the needs of Vermont citizens who value wildlife, but do not hunt, fish or trap.

The amended language in Senate Bill 321 was an attack on hunting with dogs. The requirements in the bill would have made it impossible for any hound hunter to comply with and still successfully hunt bears. After a barrage of sportsmen contacts, the Sportsmen’s Alliance and our partners finally convinced legislators to withdraw the bill.

The creation of the *Working Group on Wildlife Governance* was a first shot to remove sportsmen from wildlife decision making, even though Vermont hunters, anglers and trapper fund the majority of all wildlife conservation in the state.

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VICTORY! NEW HAMPSHIRE OUTDOOR DOG BILL STOPPED IN COMMITTEE

The Sportsmen’s Alliance and our New Hampshire members, along with other sportsmen and dog advocacy groups in the state, were able to stop HB 1389 in the Committee on Environment and Agriculture, preventing it from moving forward to the full House.

HB 1389 would have made it a crime to leave a dog outside and unattended for more than 30 minutes, unless the dog had access to a shelter built to exacting building specs. The bill would also have made it a crime to leave a dog outside for more than

15 minutes when the temperature was below 32 degrees, even if a shelter is provided.

“The Sportsmen’s Alliance is a strong advocate for protecting dogs from truly cruel and harmful neglect,” said Jacob Hupp associate director of state services at the Sportsmen’s Alliance. “HB 1389 was an example of unnecessary legislation that would have actually been harmful to sporting dogs as they are reliant on outdoor tethering and acclimation practices so they can safely perform their duties in the field.”



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CONNECTICUT BILL EQUATES OWNING TAXIDERMY TO MANSLAUGHTER

Legislation defeated by sportsmen’s groups in 2019 that would have banned possession of African hunting taxidermy has been reintroduced in Connecticut. House Bill 5104 would ban the importation, sale and possession of African elephants, black and white rhinoceros, lions, leopards and giraffes. Violators would receive the same penalties as someone convicted of manslaughter, which is subject to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and up to two years in jail.

Based on the legislation, even if you adhere to all federal laws and obtain the necessary permits to hunt or import the hides and horns, you would still be charged with a felony that carries penalties equal to that of killing a human. In order to hunt African big game, you are required to obtain the proper permits from the country you are hunting, as well as the

proper approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to import the taxidermy into the United States.

Big game hunting is a valuable business in Africa that creates jobs for locals, injects millions of dollars into the African economy and funds conservation and anti-poaching efforts. A Northwest University of South Africa study found that the country receives \$156 million in hunting-associated revenues, and also found that the average hunter will spend close to \$6,000 on lodging, food, clothing and equipment during their visit.

“This bill will ultimately lead to law-abiding Connecticut Sportsmen and women being adjudicated as if they are violent felons simply for participating in hunting,” said Jacob Hupp associate director of state services at the Sportsmen’s Alliance.



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