

The cost of conservation

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Sportsmen are on the run. The average age of most sportsmen is not unlike the average age of an AARP member. Most local clubs have abandoned recruiting activities and have circled the wagons from the Anti crowd. The Anti fishing/ hunting crowd have claimed the moral high road and tell us killing animals is immoral and evil. After a few confrontations most of us believe them and slink away. Sportsmen are now the second easiest people to pick on in the media behind people of faith. Want to make a joke talk about a hunter and his dog, Want a good laugh talk about a fisherman and his pole. Its all the same out there, the popular media finds sportsmen an easy to flog rival. The “good guys” for the most part do the name-calling. Their tactic is to shout down, attack, insult and belittle those who disagree with them. Reverse democracy in action. Where is the love? Can I find a bit of tolerance? What about diversity training? Live and let live? Not likely from the enviro-nazi crowd.

This barrage has left Sportsmen clearly in retreat. The question I ask is why? What have we done wrong? How did we lose the momentum? We were lazy and dumb that’s how. We assumed no one would listen to these guys as they ranted and raved but people did. We did not educate ourselves, or the greater public as to why hunting and fishing matter. This allowed these conservation imposters to get a foot in the door. Once they got the ear of mainstream America all bets were off. They have framed the argument in an unwinnable way for sportsmen. A sort of do you still beat your wife beginning to every argument. The enviro-nazi’s out fundraise us, out hustle us, and the result is the war we have today. Never in the history of US conservation have those who do so little been able to dictate the future so much. They posture for the media, they complain, they threaten, they paint old ladies in fur coats. (We wont see PETA in Sturgis, I Suspect; somehow leather jackets, PETA and red paint never made it to the same sentence until now.) These “environmentalist” run off deer hunters, they chase off Bass fishermen and all the while Sportsmen say nothing. The press loves it. They crow out headlines like “**Brave environmentalists tackled evil deer hunters in Michigan today, details at 6 pm** “. Make no mistake this is a war for the conservation future of this country. The “Green” folks plan on making Sportsmen extinct. Don’t believe me? Just ask them. Sportsmen need to go, they figure, simple as that. They don’t care how we go, but we need to go. Sportsmen on the other hand do not know how to deal with this the most serious threat of the last 100 years to conservation. We hide; we act like one kind of sportsmen is better or worse than another. Instead of recruiting more, we recruit less. Instead of working together, organizations snipe at each other, Instead of calmly confronting these enviro imposters we hide and mumble to ourselves.

Love to tell you this folks, we all are in the same boat, Bass fishermen, Elk hunters, Trout guys, Carp Guys, Recreational collectors, Recreational Hikers you name it we will all be hurting if these enviro-nazi’s have their way. Because without the financial support of sportsmen there will be no place to enjoy, no place to hunt, no place to hide. It’s past time for all of us who enjoy the outdoors to work together for the future of our natural heritage. No longer is it the Bass guys problem, the Hikers problem or the Hunters Problem. It is everyone’s problem. We are looking at a fundamental shift in how the conservation business is done and those of us who pay the bills are getting left out of the discussion. If the Enviro-nazi’s have their way we will live in a country with no hunting, no fishing and very little recreational use. The wildlife will be “managed” using birth control and love beads. Of course without the money from licenses there will in short order be no way to support our public lands and the psuedo science management techniques of the Enviro-nazis. Imagine the folly of managing just one no kill, no predators, birth control only herd of 1000 deer. In a few years it would be a herd of 1000’s or it would cost millions to maintain it at 1000 animals. Imagine the birth control patrol keeping records on every animal, every birth and every death. A staff of dozens, plus hardware, plus no money coming in and no science based management practices. Now apply the same silliness on the national level as the new “green” policy. Man what disaster that would be. A

system run without science or wise use of our resource to promote long-term conservation is bound to fail. Emotion should not be applied to resource management.

With that said let's look, without emotion, at the facts. First off lets deal with the supposed moral high road argument. It is framed by vegetarians and the like with the statement or one similar to this ***"I don't kill animals to eat them and neither should you. Since I don't kill things I'm more moral than you and therefore better than you"***. Now let me preclude all this by saying I have no problem with being a vegetarian. I've tried it myself for a while, but I'm not stupid enough to believe a food choice makes me more moral than the next guy. The content of my character makes me moral not the content of my stomach. I realized a long time ago that for me to eat something had to die. Look at it logically. Lets say I'm a vegetarian and eat tofu and four greens spring salad with light dressing for lunch. As I gag down my tofu, I get the warm fuzzy feeling of superiority. I start thinking I'm so good because nothing had to die for my lunch. I begin to loath those animal killers around me. How dare they eat that flesh in front of me? Sounds pretty much like I the salad eater is the good guy right? Except the salad and soybeans are grown in a large field which was once a western open prairie until someone turned it into a field. By farming it they disrupted it, they ruined the habitats of the thousands of small rodents and lizards and snakes and of course the guys a little higher up the food chain like hawks coyotes etc. All of them lost a place to live and a greatly diminished place to hunt. Now it gets even better. In order to be more productive the farmer uses modern techniques that include herbicide and pesticide. Guess what? They work and lots of bugs, good ones and bad ones all bite the dust. After the herbicides, plant diversity is gone but you do have your salad and tofu. After the harvest comes yet another killing spree called a disking. A disk is a good and wide super plow that cuts the soil deep killing other bugs and anything on the surface that gets caught in the way like snakes and such. The cow from whence my steak came spent most of his life passively hanging around a pasture being fed hay and grains all the while little bugs and birds and lizards all shared his field with not much interference in the pace of their lives.

Who then really supports the killing, me and my beefsteak, or you and your tofu medley? We both do, and as such we are on equal moral footing. Perhaps I even have the superior moral position for the cow that died for my benefit went into my stomach. All those things that died to make your salad were not used by and were wasted. Rather immoral I would say. How many thousands of little guys died to make your salad? Innocent little guys, guys that did nothing wrong except be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Little guy's part of a bizarre and amoral world called the food chain. Where animals of all types eat things to survive with no compassion for how fair it is or how pretty the thing it is eating looks. What a harsh and cold world.

Something dies so you can live. Simple as that perhaps the thing that died for my dinner was prettier than the bugs and lizards and mice and hawks and birds that died for your dinner but in the end we both are responsible for the deaths of living things so we could eat. So there is no moral high ground here. Do not under any circumstances let the enviro-nazis take one. They have no morally superior position, they are bluffing and sportsmen and the media give the "green" movement a pass on the issue. Mainstream media acts like PETA is the sainted hero while us lowly morons who hunt and fish are inferior in our IQ, our character, and in our hygiene. How many ***"love animals don't eat them"*** t-shirts and bumper stickers have you seen on the cool people of Hollywood? Dozens and dozens I'm sure. No one wears a ***Buy a hunting license save western meadowlark habitat*** t-shirt. The latter statement is however much closer to the truth. The "Green" position is devoid of real facts. It's all about the cruelty and the unfairness of it all. If we hunt, fish or eat meat we are selfish, racist, immoral, hygiene impaired individuals who deserve whatever the PETA folks dish out to us. It is of course dehumanizing 101 the first step of any fascist regime.

With all that said let's look at who pays for the land needed for these animals to live their lives. Who supports conservation by supporting the needs of animals? Who puts their money where their mouth is? Lets start with our friends at PETA their website at <http://www.peta.org/feat/ar2001/numb.html> fiscal year 2000 numbers it shows the bottom line of the over 15 million dollars taken zero dollars went to support conservation. What about buying land so the abused animals can run free? How about a sanctuary where all animals use birth control and never eat each other? How about a Nature Conservancy type partnering with local groups to preserve a unique habitat. Instead we get the PETA folks supporting PETA and nothing else. Where's the love for the animals. PETA plays by a different set of rules. They are like a virus

they inject themselves into a host with only one goal, to make more followers. It's different with Sportsmen. They don't just hire salesmen to make more sportsmen. Instead sportsmen buy land. A novel approach that helps our prey, our water and our land. PETA, however from the attached annual report spends a lot of money on PETA stuff (almost 83%) and ZERO on land purchases, conservation or anything that helps the animals they they fundraise off of.

The Year in Numbers

REVENUES

Contributions	14,781,915
Gross Merchandise Sales	562,267
Interest, Dividends, Royalties, and Other Income	436,446
Total Revenues	15,780,628

OPERATING EXPENSES

Programs	
International Grassroots Campaigns	5,222,102
Public Outreach and Education	4,464,464
Research, Investigations & Rescue	3,630,346
Cruelty-Free Merchandise Program	567,772
Supporting Organization Activities	1,000,000
Membership Development	2,577,390
Management and General Expenses	476,865
Total Operating Expenses	17,938,939
Change in Net Assets Before Extraordinary Item	(2,158,311)
Extraordinary Item—Litigation Settlement	340,231

OPERATING EXPENSE ALLOCATIONS

Direct Program Support	82.97%
Indirect Program Support	2.66%
Membership Development	14.37%

PETA is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation funded almost exclusively by the contributions of our members. We strive to use our funds in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible, a commitment illustrated by the fact that 82.97 percent of our operating expenses went directly to our programs fighting animal exploitation. We expended only 14.37 percent on fundraising efforts that drive our operations and 2.66 percent on management and general operations.

The majority of PETA's dedicated staff, 59 percent, earn only \$15,000 to \$25,499; 32 percent earn \$25,500 to \$36,999; and only the remaining 9 percent make more than \$37,000. Our president, Ingrid Newkirk, earned \$27,307 during the fiscal year ending July 31, 2000.

The financial statement shown here is for the fiscal year ending July 31, 2000, and is based on our independently audited financial statements. A copy of our complete financial statement is available upon request.

Now let's look at our friends at Greenpeace. A bit different than PETA perhaps, but based on the same premise. The premise that Humans are the problem, they have wounded this world and thus must make amends. Ok I'll buy that Humans cause problems. Ill go one further that as the dominant species on the planet we can fix the problems. With that said lets see what epic conservation fixes our friends at Greenpeace do. Their website at <http://www.greenpeace.org/annualreport/> shows the details of the 2000 budget. As Greenpeace/PETA keep telling us the animals are in desperate straights and thus need our help and donations. So their budget should show these desperate times in the battle to save our animals.

income & expenditure [€ thousands]	2000	1999
income:		
grants & donations	139,184	121,644
merchandising & licensing	1,280	1,999
interest	3,182	2,380
total income	143,646	126,023
fundraising expenditure	40,553	29,659
net income	103,093	96,364
expenditure:		
campaigns		
oceans	5,346	8,257
forests	9,040	5,604
genetic engineering	7,138	3,841
toxics	9,019	8,263
climate	10,587	8,758
nuclear & disarmament	6,536	7,983
media & communications	12,797	12,770
marine operations & action support	13,605	10,043
public information & outreach	5,844	6,621
organisational support	20,375	17,075
total non-fundraising expenditure	100,287	89,215
surplus for the year	2,806	7,149
opening fund balance	85,223	75,413
translation gain	266	2,661
closing fund balance	88,295	85,223
balance sheet		
fixed assets	23,715	19,811
current assets		
other assets	7,460	7,268
cash	83,563	82,930
total assets	114,738	110,009
liabilities		
other liabilities	26,443	24,786
fund balance	88,295	85,223
total liabilities & fund balance	114,738	110,009

Instead we see that with a massive budget of almost 140 million what they really do. With 40% of their income sucked up by fundraising, the question is what to do with rest. Even though any recruiting fee's in the non-profit world above 25% is considered top heavy and 40% would be scandalous. Well then what would Greenpeace be doing with their millions to support the animals they fundraise on. Would they be

buying rainforest, preserving watersheds or perhaps buying other unique habitat? Not these guys. Instead they produce a never-ending series of media campaigns and a constant barrage of membership drives? Where is the love for the animals, all I see is the love for making more Greenpeaceites. This operation model sadly seems to be the way these “green” organizations operate. Instead of protecting species by buying conservation properties, they have supported media everywhere. It appears from the financial statements that they like PETA have basically one purpose. Their only real passion is to make money to “hire” more spokesmen. Not much of a conservation legacy. If the PETA/Greenpeace crowd ruled the hunting/fishing/conservation debate there would be lots of staff and very few animals and even less habitat. Between these two pillars of the “green” movement they take in almost 200 million a year in income. Yet of that 200 million not a cent for property purchases, not a cent for life history research, not a cent for conservation grants, not a cent for anyone except themselves. Aldo Leopold would turn over in his grave.

What is the hard truth about the hunters/fishermen of the USA? Since 1937 at the advent of Pittman-Robinson Act a mere \$21 **billion** has been collected from these Hunters for habitat improvement and other projects, which in turn have led to the remarkable resurgence of many native species of wildlife. Through the Wildlife Restoration Act, manufacturers of shotguns, rifles and ammunition pay an 11 percent tax. The act was amended in 1970 to collect a 10 percent excise tax on handguns, and in 1972 we added an 11 percent tax on bows. A more recent amendment added a 12.4 percent tax on arrow components including shafts, points, nocks and vanes. All funds collected are apportioned to the states for wildlife restoration projects using a formula that includes one-half of the state's total land area plus half of the paid license holders. States must match at least 25 percent of a project's cost with cash or in-kind contributions under guidelines approved by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. States may use time contributed by volunteers as in-kind contributions to meet their match.

A sister program exists for fisheries. The Sport Fish Restoration Program collects excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel. Funds go toward fisheries conservation and programs to benefit anglers. Wildlife restoration funds may be used for several purposes including wildlife habitat restoration, reintroduction of wildlife, wildlife population surveys, and hunter education, research and land acquisition. And that's not the only way sportsmen and women contribute. Each day, 71 million hunters and anglers in America are working to conserve and improve our natural resources individually and as members of conservation organizations such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation and Ducks Unlimited, and hundreds of local organizations just to name a few.

These organizations raise private funds to purchase thousands of acres of habitat for wildlife. For example, since 1984, the RMEF has purchased 3.8 million acres and has a goal to purchase an additional 2 million acres by 2005 for elk habitat. Since 1973 the NWTF, has raised over \$150 million to relocate wild turkey in areas with suitable habitat. NWTF efforts have resulted in turkeys in every state except Alaska. North America has lost over half its wetlands vital to waterfowl survival and continues to loose over 100,000 acres a year. Since its inception, DU has purchased over 10 million acres of wetland habitat from the Arctic to the coastal plains. These and other efforts have seen pronghorn antelope populations jump to over one million, wild turkey numbers have topped 4.5 million, white-tailed deer populations are in excess of 18 million and the majestic Rocky Mountain elk is strong at just under one million animals. Keep in mind, that it is not just the popular big game animals that benefit from these efforts. Thousands of songbirds, small mammals, colorful butterflies and lizards, turtles and other crawly critters benefit as well.

Meanwhile our friends in the green movement have provided ZERO dollars to species preservation. Lots of cute commercials, door to door sales pitches, so called protests and rude language. Their efforts have not benefited our conservation efforts one bit. So next time some one pins you down and tries to make you feel guilty for being a sportsman say but one thing. 21 **Billion** to nothing and still counting. After it is all said and done it is obvious that the so-called green movements primary motivation is the type of green that hits the bank balance, not the type of green that helps the animals. So in reality sportsmen are green the other guys just greedy. My advice to all our readers is to buy a license to hunt or fish. If you fish or hunt you help the conservation cause, if you don't your license has still helped the cause. If you want to do a bit more pick one our more worthwhile real conservation organizations and join up. Your membership makes a world of difference and unlike those other guys you will be helping the animals not the lobbyist. Until next time good luck and good fishing