

Chapter 3

Greens and Animal Rights

GREENS, ANIMAL RIGHTS, AND CONSERVATION

One of the more harmful things about The Myth of the Environmental Movement is that it lumps the animal rights movement and the Green-political movement in with conservation and environmentalism. Just as conservation and environmentalism have separate origins, philosophies, followers, and organizations, so do animal rights and Greens from each other and from conservation and environmentalism. Of course, sometimes they overlap on issues and campaigns with conservation and environmentalism, but there are also frequent cases of these other movements clashing with conservation. This comes most often from their extremes. Indeed, each of these movements represents a political spectrum of its own.

THE GREEN POLITICAL MOVEMENT

The Green political parties that popped up in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, and other nations during the 1980s and 1990s are widely identified with conservation groups because of their use of the word “green” to describe themselves. Such Green Parties originally claimed an ecological worldview and many still do to varying degrees, although their approach is decidedly more environmental or enviro-resourcist than conservationist. With “ecology,” the Greens blended peace, democracy, and justice concerns.

At first, their slogan was, “Neither right nor left, but in front.” In the 1980s, however, the so-called Red Greens took over the pioneering Green Party in Germany from its more ecologically oriented leaders like Petra Kelly.¹ In the United States, the

¹ In several countries with parliamentary systems, Green parties have often played a positive role on ecological issues.

1987 national gathering of the rather fuzzy Green movement was subverted by urban anarchists and remnants of the New Left. Lorna Salzman, a former staffer for Friends of the Earth and an early Green organizer in the United States, detailed this takeover in her privately circulated paper (January 1992), "The U.S. Greens: A Dream Ends, A Nightmare Begins," later published in the British magazine *Real WORLD*. She said that the ecologically knowledgeable Greens dropped out because of "the Left Greens' endless argumentative adversary approach, *ad hominem* attacks, Machiavellian techniques, not-so-subtle perversions of the truth, and their endless late-night meetings."² She wrote that the new Green program "may be the last socialist program in the world." She closed her epitaph for the Green movement in the United States with:

*A seven-year odyssey for social and political purpose is now being methodically dismantled by the same Left ideologues who have, generation after generation, failed to understand the roots of the societal crisis or propose any just ecological alternative. What the Left succeeds at all too well is in subverting any promising movement or philosophy for their own purposes.*³

Following the Marxist takeover and resulting withering away of the national Green *movement*, actual Green *political parties* were set up in several states and nationally. In New Mexico, where the Green Party fielded candidates and collected up to 12 percent of the state-wide vote in 1994 (thus gaining major party status), the self-righteous social-justice wing in 1996 took votes away from a conservation-friendly Democrat in the northern New Mexico congressional district and gave the seat to a rabidly anticonservation Christian Coalition Republican.⁴ Fortunately, two years later a proconservation Democrat, Tom Udall, defeated the Republican despite Green Party

² There is an old lefty joke that the primary and essential characteristic of those who rise in Marxist ranks is a large bladder.

³ Lorna Salzman, "The U. S. Greens: A Dream Ends, A Nightmare Begins," January, 1992. An edited version appears in *Real WORLD*, Spring 1993.

⁴ This was the cause for one of the few disagreements I had with Dave Brower, who had been bamboozled into publicly supporting the Green.

efforts at sabotage, and has become an outstanding leader on conservation issues. In 2006, New Mexico Attorney General Patricia Madrid ran for Congress against Republican Heather Wilson. Madrid had strong support from conservationists and environmentalists, but the Green congressional candidate from 1996 came out for Wilson. Madrid lost by a mere 800-some votes.

The New Mexico Green Party has supported the cutting of remnant old-growth ponderosa pines on the Carson National Forest so long as the logging would be done by a local Hispano. Previously, in November 1995, some Greens had even taken part in the effigy hanging of one of their own members, Sam Hitt, who had sued the Forest Service to protect the Mexican spotted owl in northern New Mexico.⁵ Former Green Party candidate for governor of New Mexico in 1994 and perennial political opportunist, Roberto Mondragon, was heard to say at the lynching, "We should be killing these guys for real."⁶

In response to a pro-logging opinion column by northern New Mexico political *patrons*, one of the founders of the New Mexico Green Party, Jack Uhrich, made it clear that the Greens did not support conservationist efforts to protect national forest lands from old-growth logging and overgrazing. In a letter to the *Albuquerque Journal*, he wrote, "The Green Party is much more than an environmental party. Our platform calls for social justice, self-determination, universal health care and many other changes....I therefore protest your paper's use of the word 'green' to describe the positions and actions of some environmentalists, some of whom may or may not be registered in the Green Party...."⁷ I could not agree more. We should stay away from calling ourselves "green."

⁵ Sam Hitt, "Green Hate in the land of enchantment," *High Country News*, Feb. 3, 1997.

⁶ John Talberth, "Lynched! In The Land Of Enchantment," *Wild Forest Review*, Jan/Feb. 1996.

⁷ Jack Uhrich, "Party Trademarks Word 'Green,'" Letters to the Journal, *Albuquerque Journal*, Nov. 21, 1997.

These Green Parties are no more inherently conservation oriented than are the Democratic or Republican parties in the United States. Whatever ecological values they claimed once upon a time, they are now more of a political party of the Left, in favor of the welfare state, disarmament, socialism, and political correctness. During the 1998 election in New Mexico where Green candidates opposed both anticonservation Republicans and proconservation Democrats in two congressional races, one Green Party campaigner wrote, "Democrats who appeal to the Greens with a heavy focus on environmental issues are missing the mark. At least in New Mexico, the Greens do not push environmental issues nearly as much as they push economic and social justice issues...."⁸ In 2003, a Green Party leader ran against wilderness consultant Martin Heinrich in a wide-open race for the Albuquerque City Council even though a developers' darling was also running. Fortunately, Heinrich won and has since been a leader for ecological sanity in city government.

And, of course, it was America's leading egomaniac, Ralph Nader, and his self-righteous followers in the Green Party that put Bush Junior in the White House in 2000. Nader's race is the classic case of sacrificing the attainable good for the unattainable perfect. Too many progressives would rather be noble, self-righteous losers than realistic winners. Had Al Gore become president in 2000, we would be protecting roadless areas, ecological integrity, and sensitive species on the national forests. We would not still be fighting off the industrialization of the Arctic Plain in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The United States would be leading instead of hindering efforts to deal with greenhouse gases. And on and on and on. I am pleased that some 2000 Nader supporters and even some Green Party folks came to understand their tragic error and did not support Nader in his 2004 run.

⁸ Peter Jenkins, "Letters to the Editor," *The Albuquerque Tribune*, October 24, 1998.

Our alliances must be based on clear thinking and a clear vision of what we stand for and what others stand for. Thus, we conservationists should strive to distance ourselves from this leftist bunch and we should fight their veiled attacks on public lands, old-growth forests, and endangered species. We should never call ourselves “greens.” This said, there are some darned good conservationists still involved in the Green political movement, but they do not dominate it. There are also signs that the Greens are now fading away as a political force in the United States.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

A big part of The Myth of the Environmental Movement is that environmentalists and therefore conservationists are in favor of animal rights and thereby are vegetarian, antihunting, antigun, and so on. This stereotype is one of the more crippling parts of the Myth, and conservationists need to blow it out of the water. Of course, the radical right, including some leaders of the National Rifle Association (NRA) and Safari Club International, have pushed this story in order to get some hunters to oppose conservation measures and to fear conservation groups such as the Sierra Club.

It's been a strange journey, these last thirty-some years. When I started in conservation, no one was surprised that hunters, outfitters, and sportfishers were leaders in the conservation movement. That was taken for granted as it had been for over a century. But now it is widely assumed that environmentalists and conservationists are opposed to gun ownership and to hunting, and that most of us are vegetarians. I'm glad to report that conservationists who are hunters are again drawing attention, and that conservation groups are running outreach campaigns to bring the sporting community back in. What the dickens went wrong? What went wrong was part of the “environmental” slide to progressivism and the radical right's successful culture-war con.

Martha Marks, founder of Republicans for Environmental Protection, sees the linkage between Vietnam War protesters and Earth Day environmentalism as the beginning of the split. “If you were proenvironment, you must be a long-haired, commie, pinko liberal. And if you were a liberal, you were against gun rights and for animal rights. That was absolutely not true,” she says.⁹ Identification of the conservation and environmental movements with the antihunting, antifishing, antigun, antimeat-eating animal rights movement has caused incalculable harm to our public image and to our political clout. Working out the relationship between conservation and animal rights is essential. Let's go to the beginning.

Roderick Nash writes, “As early as the fifteenth century, and increasingly in the seventeenth and eighteenth, protests sounded over practices such as vivisection, cock-fighting, staged fights with dogs known as bull- and bear-baiting, fox hunting....”¹⁰ In 1789, English utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham argued for an end to cruelty to animals: “The question is not, Can they *reason?* nor Can they *talk?* but Can they *suffer?*”¹¹ In his book, *The Rights of Nature*, Nash argues that this concern for other creatures was an extension of Lockean natural rights. Today's animal rights movement comes largely out of this tradition, though it is also influenced by Buddhist and other notions of compassion as “right attitude.”

There are root differences in both philosophy and practice between conservationists and most parts of the animal rights movement.

The philosophy of the animal rights movement is based on *compassion*—eliminating the suffering of *individual* creatures. This emphasis on individuals and the goal of eliminating suffering are important in understanding why animal rights and

⁹ Bob Marshall, “The Conservamentalists: Can the sports and the greens find common ground?” <http://www.fieldandstream.com>, email from Bart Semcer, October 10, 2005.

¹⁰ Roderick Frazier Nash, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1989), 19.

¹¹ Nash, *The Rights of Nature*, 23.

conservation are sometimes at odds and why it is necessary for conservationists to make it clear that we often are at odds.

Today's animal rights/animal welfare movement covers a swath of groups from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the English Hunt Saboteurs. The spread is in both actions and philosophy. The Humane Society is a mainstream advocacy organization concerned with the humane treatment of animals. PETA is a radical vegan organization opposed to any use of animals and willing to engage in civil disobedience and violent attacks on property and even persons (throwing rocks at sportfishers, for example).¹² ALF and the Hunt Saboteurs oppose any use of animals and engage in sometimes violent actions such as burning down animal experimentation laboratories and physically assaulting hunters.

The different organizations are involved in a spread of issues. Groups to varying degrees support humane treatment of animals and vegetarianism, and oppose animal experimentation, factory farming, fur trapping, hunting and fishing for sport or any other purpose, and exploitation of animals in circuses and rodeos.

Some of the more moderate organizations do not like to be called part of the animal rights movement, by the way, and prefer to be known as the animal welfare or animal protection movement. I usually have little complaint about the animal welfare movement and believe that they generally work well with conservationists on ecological issues. For example, in New Mexico, Animal Protection is a lead player in highway barrier issues, as is HSUS nationally. Furthermore, I support them on many animal welfare issues; in fact, I give money to my local humane society to find homes for stray cats. I have a great deal of compassion for individual animals—but that compassion is trumped by my love for native species and ecosystems. The animal rights groups I

¹² *Vegetarians* eat no meat, but may eat cheese and other animal products. *Vegans* eat no animal products at all, including honey.

criticize here—and encourage conservationists to distance themselves from—are those who are loudly opposed to all hunting and fishing, control of exotic species and overpopulated native species, and who release dangerous exotic species in sensitive habitats.

Conservationists and extreme animal rightists stare at each other across a chasm. While conservationists do, of course, support the humane treatment of animals and many are troubled by vivisection and factory farming, we have different goals from those of animal rightists. On two issues we come into hard conflict: hunting and fishing, and control of exotic species. The basis for this disagreement is in worldview and philosophy. Conservation is about the integrity of the ecological community and the continuation of the evolutionary waltz. Animal rights are about eliminating suffering of individual animals. The animal rights philosophy can be profoundly nonecological; in fact it is sometimes abiological. Paul Shepard called it “a pursuit of an abstract harmony with nature.”¹³ Pain, suffering, and death are inherent in life, in Nature. Ecologists and conservationists know this well, whereas, at their extreme, animal rights supporters deny it and try to eliminate it. That the lion shall lie down with the lamb is a blindly unecological fantasy (unless the lamb happens to be lunch).

Two leading animal rights philosophers, Peter Singer and Tom Regan, show how abiological their respective positions, animal liberation and animal rights, really are. The editor of the academic journal *Environmental Ethics*, Eugene Hargrove, writes, “Singer makes the division between animals and ‘vegetables’ somewhere between the oyster and the shrimp.”¹⁴ In other words, Singer, in his wisdom, has decided that shrimp are sentient and feel pain and pleasure; oysters are not and do not. It is okay to eat the dumb oysters, but not the smart shrimp. Regan is even less in touch with biology.

¹³ Paul Shepard, *Man in the Landscape: A Historic View of the Esthetics of Nature* (University of Georgia Press, Athens, 2002(1967)), 194.

¹⁴ Eugene C. Hargrove, “Preface,” in Eugene C. Hargrove, ed. *The Animal Rights/Environmental Ethics Debate: The Environmental Perspective* (State University of New York Press, Albany, 1992), x.

Hargrove writes, “Regan...argues against any direct moral concern for plants, animals other than mammals, or ecosystems; and he criticizes environmentalists for protecting species and systems instead of individual mammals, an approach he calls *environmental fascism*.”¹⁵ He does not think endangered species are important. Under his view, an individual California condor is of no more value than an individual domestic chicken. Hargrove warns that Regan comes “close to suggesting the removal of predators from natural systems.”¹⁶ Philosopher J. Baird Callicott writes that “both Singerian animal liberation and Reganic animal rights imply the ecological nightmare of a policy of predator extermination.”¹⁷ Both Singer and Regan are classic ivory-tower theorists, as much so as postmodern deconstructionists and libertarian economists.

The chapter “Fellow Creatures” in Paul Shepard's 1967 book, *Man in the Landscape*, is a powerful dissection of the troubling anti-ecological thinking behind fundamentalist animal rights. Shepard writes, “The condemnation of killing wild animals assumes that death is the worst of natural events, that order in nature is epitomized by living objects rather than the complex flow patterns of which objects are temporary formations. The implication is that carnivorous predation as a whole is evil.”¹⁸

Canadian naturalist John Livingston writes that “‘animal rights,’ if carried to its logical conclusion, is potentially destructive to the quality of wildness—the essence of untrammelled being.”¹⁹

PETA and others twist human biological and cultural evolution and the findings of primate research to argue that we are “naturally” vegetarians, rather than omnivores who have always eaten meat when we could. Recent research by primatologists and

¹⁵ Hargrove, “Preface,” x.

¹⁶ Hargrove, “Preface,” xi.

¹⁷ J. Baird Callicott, “Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Back Together Again,” in *The Animal Rights/Environmental Ethics Debate*, 261.

¹⁸ Shepard, *Man in the Landscape*, 206.

¹⁹ John A. Livingston, *Rogue Primate: An exploration of human domestication* (Key Porter Books, Toronto, 1994), 175.

human paleontologists has demolished this vegetarian myth.²⁰ (I am not criticizing those who choose to be vegetarians, however.) Studying this philosophical basis for animal rights allows us to understand why conservationists are often in opposition to them over hunting issues, control of exotic species, and overall ecosystem protection.

Exotic species pose one of the gravest threats to natural ecosystems and rare native species around the world. Feral pigs rip up some of the last native tropical forest in Hawaii; feral burros drove bighorn sheep away from water holes in the Grand Canyon, before burros were eliminated over the opposition of animal-rights groups; released goats in the Galapagos Islands have harmed the native vegetation on which the giant tortoises depend. But when biologists, with the support of conservationists, try to remove destructive exotics to protect natural habitat, extremist animal-rights groups raise a hue and cry and unleash their considerable political clout to protect the burros, pigs, or goats. Following Regan, they believe that an individual burro is as valuable as an individual bighorn. The legions of Bambi lovers rise up when land managers try to cull overpopulated herds down to a size the land can support. For example, in the eastern half of the United States, deer populations are unnaturally high because of the elimination of their predators, wolves and cougars, and the wholesale transformation of habitat; yet some ecologically blind animal lovers passionately oppose any efforts to reduce deer populations, which, by the way, would eliminate much suffering by deer from starvation and road kill.²¹ Even some moderate animal welfare groups oppose control of overpopulated deer and exotic species; for example, they are opposing removal of an exotic species of deer in Point Reyes National Seashore in California. On

²⁰ Craig B. Stanford, *The Hunting Apes: Meat Eating and the Origins of Human Behavior* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1999) convincingly offers the evidence for the importance of meat eating by hominins.

²¹ See The Rewilding Institute website at www.rewilding.org for more information.

an international level, Paul Ehrlich writes, “Lunatic fringe animal rights groups...are increasingly a thorn in the side of others who are attempting to conserve biodiversity.”²²

For example, biologically ignorant members of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and Earth Liberation Front (ELF) have released fur-farmed mink from their cages. In one case in England, they released 6,000 mink, whereupon the big weasels escaped into the New Forest. Mink are not native to England, are voracious predators, and the New Forest is a valuable natural area. “Forest officer Howard Taylor said the massive release of the mink into the forest was a nightmare.”²³ *Time* reported on “perhaps the largest illegal animal release in U.S. history” when ALF attacked a mink farm in Oregon. Many of the released mink were unweaned babies and rapidly died.²⁴ I do not like fur farming, but I marvel at the basic ecological ignorance of ALF and ELF saboteurs and at their short-term thinking.

Sportsmen were a major part of the early conservation movement and remain an important part today—some are deeply biocentric. For example, Scott Stouder, a well-known leader in the sporting community, writes simply, “Animals have a right to exist for their own sake beyond any use they may be to us.”²⁵ I’ve written earlier that this is the fundamental view of conservation. Many wilderness and wildlife defenders, like Michael Soulé and me, have been hunters and sportfishers. Ortega y Gasset, Paul Shepard, Aldo Leopold, and other great conservationists have written how hunting ties one to the land as nothing else does.²⁶

²² Paul R. Ehrlich, *A World of Wounds: Ecologists and the Human Dilemma* (Ecology Institute, Oldendorf/Luhe, Germany, 1997), 71.

²³ “Mink Menace,” *Albuquerque Tribune*, August 15, 1997.

²⁴ Christine Gorman, “Blood and Fur,” *Time*, June 16, 1997.

²⁵ Scott Stouder, “The Power of Story,” *Backcountry Journal: The newsletter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers*, Summer 2005.

²⁶ Paul Shepard argued in all his books for the importance of hunting. The chapter “Fellow Creatures” in Paul Shepard, *Man in the Landscape: A Historic View of the Esthetics of Nature* (University of Georgia Press, Athens, 2002), originally published in 1967, is a summary. Three more recent books also do a fine job of making the case for hunting. See Richard Nelson, *The Island Within* (Vintage Books, New York, 1991); Jim Fergus, *A Hunter’s Road* (Henry Holt and

While some moderate animal welfare groups do not necessarily oppose hunting and fishing, most of the animal rights movement wants to ban recreational hunting and fishing and the lethal control of problem animals. This opposition is so fierce that, during the mid-1990s, PETA launched a campaign to throw rocks at sportfishers. This was too much even for some Earth First!ers. Mike Roselle lambasted PETA for their stupidity and recognized the conservation contributions of sportfishers. He wrote, "It shocks me how many animal rights activists use the exact tone of voice and the same tactics as Operation Rescue activists often do."²⁷ However, other Earth First!ers condemned Roselle for his political incorrectness.²⁸

PETA supporters are influential in several groups and chapters of the Sierra Club. These animal-rights Sierrans have opposed the Club's outstanding Hunter-Angler Outreach campaign with which I work. Other animal-rights Sierrans advocate vegetarianism as official Sierra Club policy. (Some of these folks are my friends and are allies on other issues.)

Beyond philosophical and issue differences, the myth that conservationists and environmentalists embrace the animal-rights movement and are opposed to hunting and fishing is politically disastrous. The nonsense of lumping animal rights and conservation together in the popular mind makes it easier for anticonservation troublemakers such as radicals in the NRA to split the sporting community away from conservation organizations. Conservationists need to do everything possible to blow this myth out of the water. We need to consistently encourage conservationists who hunt and fish to be

Company, New York, 1992); and David Petersen, ed., *A Hunter's Heart: Honest Essays on Blood Sports* (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1996).

²⁷ Mike Roselle, "Fish-fry at the PC Corral," *Earth First!* 3/20/96, 23.

²⁸ The new Earth First! of the 1990s and since should be thought of as an entirely different organization from the original Earth First! of the 1980s. Eighties Earth First! was a conservation group with many "rednecks for wilderness," who were hunters and fishers. Since the early 1990s, EF!, although it sometimes works on conservation issues, seems to be made up mostly of urban anarchists, animal-rights radicals, class-struggle Marxists, and politically-correct leftists.

our spokespeople and to include sporting groups in coalitions on specific issues. The Sierra Club nationally is doing a very good job on this with a committee of staff and volunteers who hunt and fish. They have effectively represented the Club at hunting and fishing shows and at the Outdoor Writers Association conventions. The recently formed group Backcountry Hunters and Anglers is taking a tough and visible role on conservation issues. Trout Unlimited has a public lands initiative that works to protect roadless areas.²⁹ The New Mexico Wildlife Federation is a classic bunch of good ol' boy and gal hunters and anglers and is at the heart of public-land defense campaigns in my home state. I back all of these efforts. Of course, there are plenty of slob hunters out there and they make up a sizable part of the anticonservation movement. It is right and proper for all conservationists, whether they hunt or not, to oppose slob hunting (such as shooting bears over bait piles of doughnuts and “hunting” from saddles of all-terrain vehicles).

Although the public and media often see the conservation and animal-rights movements as one and the same, conservationists have long criticized animal-rights extremists. As early as 1982, I pointed out major differences in a column in the *Earth First! Journal*.³⁰ In 1992, ecophilosopher Eugene Hargrove edited an anthology, *The Animal Rights/Environmental Ethics Debate*, which showcased the environmental (conservation) response to animal rights. Included was J. Baird Callicott's landmark 1980 paper, “Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair,” in which he wrote, “There are intractable practical differences between environmental ethics and the animal liberation

²⁹ The Sierra Club Hunter-Angler program is at www.sierraclub.org/huntingfishing; Backcountry Hunters and Anglers is at www.backcountryhunters.org.

³⁰ Chim Blea (Dave Foreman), “Cat Tracks: The Ethics of Vegetarianism,” *Earth First!* September 21, 1982.

movement....animal liberation, if pursued at the practical as well as rhetorical level, would have ruinous consequences on plants, soils, and waters....”³¹

I also see a problem with the concept of “rights” for other species. Some conservationists, including me, have talked about rights for other animals. On reflection, I think this is risky and sloppy thinking. *Rights* are a legal concept that should be reserved for humans. When we confer rights on other species, we take them out of Nature, out of self-willed land, out of their self-willed being, and bring them into the political, legalistic world of civilized *Homo sapiens*. We establish our will, albeit a benign will, over them, essentially domesticating them. A better approach is to acknowledge that humans do not have the *right* to extend our will over Nature. Of course, *right* can be used in a nonlegal sense and that is okay.

Despite these differences, many animal welfare organizations often cooperate with conservationists. The Humane Society of the United States has worked with conservation groups on some national issues. Animal-welfare supporters and self-respecting hunters teamed up in Colorado, California, Oregon, and other states in the 1990s to push ballot measures banning unethical hunting practices such as shooting bears over bait piles of garbage, hunting bears with dogs, or spring hunting of bears when females are just out of the den with cubs. Conservation groups and animal-welfare groups have joined together against the federal government's slaughter of coyotes, prairie dogs, bears, mountain lions, and other predators or “problem animals” for the benefit of a few ranchers and farmers. Captain Paul Watson of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society draws enthusiastic support from both conservationists and animal rightists for his bold, high-seas campaigns against illegal whaling, clubbing of harp seals, and drift-netting (I am on the Sea Shepherd Advisory Board with both Tom Regan and Peter Singer, interestingly, though I’ve never met either). Animal-

³¹ J. Baird Callicott, “Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair,” in *The Animal Rights/Environmental Debate*, 60.

welfare groups and conservationists are working well together with highway departments to add wildlife passages over and under deadly roads.³² And let me not use a strawdog: I personally know of few animal-rights activists today who follow the extremist Regan anti-ecosystem/antipredator line.

Nonetheless, the conservation movement and the animal-rights movement are different and separate in philosophy, issues, and people. Conservationists should never allow anyone to mistakenly characterize us as animal rightists. And folks and groups in the animal-welfare movement should go out of their way to separate themselves from extremist animal-rights activists.

Ending the perceived rift between conservationists and hunters is essential. However, the problem is exacerbated by the way the coming-together is characterized by the media and others. For example, the *Baltimore Sun*, in an otherwise good article, used the headline, "Unlikely partners unite on the environment." Tom Pelton writes, "But there is mounting evidence that left-leaning nature lovers can gain significant national political influence by forming an unlikely alliance with conservative middle-class hunters." Fortunately, he then quotes Melanie Griffin of the Sierra Club who sets the record straight: "Oftentimes, environmentalists and hunters and fishermen are called 'nontraditional allies,' but actually they are traditional allies that are coming back together again after a few decades of separation."³³

The real truth, however, is that the fissure was between *environmentalists* and hunters, not between *conservationists* and hunters. The fissure was also between ethical, conservationist hunters and slob hunters. Throughout my entire conservation life, I have worked closely on wilderness and wildlife issues with other conservationists who hunt and fish like I do. The problem between some Nature-loving hunters and anglers and conservationists was partly due to sportsmen and women applying the

³² Information on the highway barrier effort is at www.rewilding.org.

³³ Tom Pelton, "Unlikely partners unite on environment," *Baltimore Sun*, June 12, 2005.

Environmentalist Stereotype to wildlands conservationists. There is, of course, and will remain a real split between slob hunters on their ATVs who hate wolves and other predators and principled hunters who are conservationists. It is important that conservation groups in their efforts to work with hunters do not pander or lower their standards of sportsmanship. Respect is one of the underpinnings of conservation. Outdoor recreation, including hunting, should be based on an ethic of respect for Nature. Conservationist hunters and anglers are right to criticize hunting and fishing practices and styles that do not show respect for the individual critter, the species, its ecosystem, and wild Nature. We must also acknowledge that uncontrolled hunting and fishing have caused the extinction and near-extinction of many species.

The challenge for conservationists is to kill the myth that we are opposed to hunting, meat-eating, and gun ownership. We must return hunters and sportfishers to prominence in our cause to protect wild Nature, while being able to work with the animal-welfare movement on wildlife protection and habitat issues.