



**"If we could shut down all sport hunting in a moment, we would."**

Wayne Pacelle, HSUS president

▼ Wayne Pacelle, current head of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), presents the public face of the animal "rights" extremists.

# Two Face



Radical Groups Use Savvy Tactics To Push A Wacky Agenda



▲ Meanwhile, Ingrid Newkirk, founder of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), shows their true colors.

**P**ERHAPS MORE THAN any other public interest group in America, the radical animal "rights" organizations have two faces. There's the one they present to the public and (more importantly) to potential donors. Then there's the other face, the true one, which encompasses a philosophy that is more anti-human than pro-animal.

The two largest and best-funded animal "rights" groups, Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), both rely on financial support that often comes from people who have no idea what their real agendas are. In many cases, that support is based on misunderstanding, or even deception.

HSUS has long benefited from the use of the term "humane society." Many erroneously believe HSUS operates animal shelters, rescue groups and other animal welfare operations. Well-meaning people give money, thinking they are assisting the operation of these local and regional organizations that do so much to help animals. However, the truth is HSUS has never operated an animal shelter of any kind. Ever. And PETA employees have been arrested, prosecuted and convicted for illegally disposing of animals killed in its "shelter" operations.

The public face of HSUS talks of ending barbaric practices such as dog fighting, but rarely emphasizes its efforts to mandate all dogs be spayed or neutered—which would, of course, shut down hunting dog breeders. Nor does HSUS publicize its work to give pets the same legal status as a husband or wife in domestic abuse cases.

In the area of hunting, HSUS claims to oppose only "the most egregious forms of hunting." The problem is, they find all hunting egregious. In state after state, HSUS has opposed hunting of all sorts: Dove hunting (the most commonly hunted gamebird in America), bear hunting, cougar hunting, varmint hunting and more. They oppose these hunts regardless of the sound conservation science that supports them. They continually press for "alternatives" to hunting, such as the wildly expensive (and proven ineffective) use of contraceptives to control exploding deer populations.

HSUS has also opposed NRA's successful efforts to lower the hunting age in many states, arguing: "At a time when youth violence is a nationwide epidemic and our children already face many threats every day, we should not put them in more danger or teach them that killing defenseless animals is wholesome entertainment." Of course, the charge is baseless; studies have shown youth who are taught to hunt and respect firearms and wildlife are less likely to become engaged in criminal activity, and hunting is safer than a host of activities that kids regularly engage in, such as swimming, football and bicycling.

Finally, HSUS always opposes lifting the restriction that 10 states have on Sunday hunting. HSUS fails, however, to explain how hunting on Sunday is "egregious"—no doubt because it would just as soon ban hunting on the other six days.

Another area where HSUS has been very active is "canned hunting." HSUS uses this term just as the anti-gun movement uses the term "assault weapon," to divide opponents and win passage of a broader ban. But, as usual when it comes to legislation, the devil is most definitely in the details. In one case, HSUS pressed hard for legislation

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that defined so-called "canned hunting" as hunting within any "man-made enclosure, regardless of the size." A five-acre parcel of land would be treated the same as a 20,000-acre piece. Of course, HSUS hoped lawmakers would miss the point as they talked of "killers shooting animals in cages."

In 2005, HSUS entered into an alliance with the equally radical Fund for Animals, forming a litigation group to use the courts to interfere with or end legal hunts. They have used this group to bring lawsuits in states like Maine, Wisconsin, Maryland and New Jersey, and to challenge hunting on federal wildlife refuges. Their lawyers abuse federal law by ignoring congressional intent. In their minds, the end always justifies the means.

HSUS has also begun an effort to take land out of the reach of hunters through the "Wildlife Land Trust"—a novel take on the conservation easements used by many landowners to save on taxes while preserving wildlife habitat from development. In HSUS's bizarre twist, the group encourages people to set their land aside as a part of the trust, but only if the landowner forbids hunting. HSUS doesn't explain how it intends to manage animal populations on these lands, or how it will deal with the inevitable catastrophe when populations of deer or other creatures overwhelm the habitat. Apparently, these are not HSUS's concerns. HSUS is working to gain tax benefits for these lands (similar to current types of conservation easements), which means we would all pay to move HSUS's anti-hunting agenda forward. This program is in its infancy, with less than a million acres signed up, but potential donors need to learn about HSUS's radical agenda and the repercussions of ignoring sound conservation science.

One of the hallmarks of HSUS is hypocrisy—from the deftly hidden agenda that claims opposition to only some hunting while working to end all, to the refusal to acknowledge the radical agenda's consequences for animal welfare. Overpopulation of animal species will occur if there is no control. For example, HSUS opposes cougar hunting in California, but the growth

in cougar numbers has meant more human-cougar encounters and attacks and a growing need for state officials to kill the big cats. There might not be cougar hunting in California, but there are still cougars being killed.

Likewise, as you read this, there are national parks in three states with dangerously large elk populations. These herds are not dangerous to man, but are certainly dangerous to the ecologies of the parks and to the elk herds themselves. Hunting is recognized as the best way to control these herds at sustainable and healthy levels, but HSUS opposes establishing hunts within the parks. The impact of overpopulation, including animals dying of starvation and the catastrophic impact that the depletion of food supplies has on other species such as song birds, seems to indicate that HSUS is more opposed to hunting than it is concerned for the welfare of animals.

Over the past three years, a debate has raged in Congress over the fate of the Roosevelt elk and Kaibab mule deer herds living on Santa Rosa Island off California's coast for more than

a century. Both are subspecies with limited numbers on the mainland, yet environmental bureaucrats and their congressional allies want these animals exterminated. NRA has worked tirelessly to stop the complete destruction of these animals and HSUS has done nothing to save them. Once again, by all indications, HSUS would rather see all the animals needlessly destroyed than allow the hunting of a few as a management tool.

HSUS and PETA are serious threats to our hunting heritage precisely because they have learned from our successes and their failures. They are better organized and better funded than they were 20 years ago. They are more careful in how they present their agenda and they are actively working to divide the hunting community into factions they can turn against one another. As with the anti-gun community, each victory fuels the fundraising machine and sets the stage for the next attack. For hunting to survive, we must remain united against these extremists, and ensure that our friends and families know their true agenda. ☐

**PETA, The Pop Stars Of Animal "Rights" Radicalism** It is tempting to dismiss the other large animal "rights" group, PETA, the same way most adult Americans dismiss misbehaving Hollywood starlets. The problem is, many of our kids don't dismiss those miscreants—and PETA works hard to get its message out to the same people who care what Paris, Nicole, Britney and Lindsay are doing.

While embracing many of the same positions as HSUS, PETA has always taken a different path. It targets the glamorous world of Hollywood, cultivating celebrity spokesmen and women and focusing on the publicity that protests, boycotts and other such publicity-seeking stunts will generate. (Gaining news coverage by displaying naked or nearly naked young women in cages is a typical tactic.) PETA doesn't spend the time, effort and money HSUS does in the courtroom or the hearing room, but the threat they pose is real nonetheless, because their prime targets are our children.

PETA has gone to great lengths to indoctrinate kids and young adults by creating materials, including comic books and videos, that teach its radical agenda, and then getting sympathetic teachers to use those materials in the classroom. One of PETA's comic books proclaims on the cover, "Your Daddy Kills Animals!" and warns kids to keep the family dog away from him. Why? Because dad is a fisherman.

PETA's PR machine is relentless. PETA selects a "vegetarian of the year" from among notable celebrities and presents that person as a role model for children. Each year it attacks restaurant chains that serve meat, circuses that have animal acts and, of course, any pharmaceutical company that uses animals to develop life-saving medicines.

And of course, PETA opposes all hunting. It describes hunting as "cruel and unnecessary" and presses for the same ineffective "alternatives" as HSUS, including sterilizing the deer population. PETA also recommends interfering with legal hunts, calling on activists to "protest organized hunts, and spread deer repellent or human hair (from barber shops) near hunting areas."

With a multi-million dollar budget, and the willing support of celebrity vegans who want to force their lifestyle on everyone, PETA represents the pop-culture side of the animal "rights" movement. We should all take care that PETA's message is not spoon fed to our kids when we are not watching.

