Dear Friends Old and New,

We think of you so very often, wishing you safety, health and resilience in these chaotic and perilous times. To say 2020 has been “one hell of a year” is an obvious understatement. And 2021 brings more uncertainty, albeit spiced with hope for positive change. At the very least, the Biden administration should return us to science as a basis for most environmental policies. One thing we ARE sure about is that we are alive and kicking for wildlife and continue to see positive things happening amidst the madness.

Our finances, however, are tenuous. In September we held off on our customary fundraiser in order to launch an emergency campaign to save wolves in Washington State. We spoke out unabashedly and graphically against the slaughter when other groups didn’t, and it worked! The kill orders were called off and the governor urged reform (read more below). While this campaign cost us dearly, as it meant we didn’t bring in essential income, the win was priceless.

We’re not usually this blunt, but financially things are dire. Our ongoing battles against USDA Wildlife Services and state “killing agencies”—combined with fallout from the pandemic—have created the perfect storm. We currently have only a few months before we run out of funding. If you’ve been planning to donate, this would be a REALLY good time. Now, back to the good news!

You Helped Save Wolves & Spark Reform in Washington State

If you read our emails and social media posts this fall, you likely shared our excitement over our September ad campaign in Washington State’s largest newspaper, The Seattle Times. These ads may even be how you first heard about our organization. (If so, welcome!) Called “Bad Math in Washington State,” the campaign included full-page print ads, online ads and a social media campaign that graphically excoriating Washington for killing 34 wolves to date for cows. We made it clear that all killings were for ranchers who have refused to adequately protect their livestock or have insisted on grazing them in unsuitable, indefensible locations. The ads asked you to speak out. And you did, BIG time. Thank you!

— cont. on page 8
In 1994 I lost my dog Ruby and I, myself, was injured by an M-44 sodium cyanide device on my family’s farm near Harrisburg, OR. In our search for help and answers, Predator Defense was the only corner of support we found. They seemed to be the only outfit with the guts to fight the powerful, corrupt, and dangerous operation responsible [USDA Wildlife Services]. From my own experience I know what an enormous and daunting battle this will continue to be, but I have been thrilled to see the battles Predator Defense has won to date against Wildlife Services, including a statewide ban on M-44s in Oregon. Predator Defense has my undying support and gratitude for their courage and perseverance in taking on a very nasty Goliath. I greatly hope they will get the support they need to continue this fight for the sake of all of us.

- Amanda Wood Kingsley

If you are a frequent follower or supporter of Predator Defense you have probably read my tragic story about Bella, my Husky mix, getting trapped in a wolf snare in August 2010. In a desperate attempt to free herself she chewed off her right foot, resulting in the amputation of an entire leg. All this by no fault of her own. She was just another innocent animal/nontarget species getting in the way of the federal government’s haphazard and irresponsible methods of wildlife management. This was a very traumatic time for me, not to mention my unfortunate best friend and companion, Bella. Just imagine finding your close pet friend in this situation—in shock, bleeding, missing a foot, with parts scattered around and miles from your vehicle. Later that day I would hear of a little-known government agency named USDA Wildlife Services for the first time.

After the incident a few months went by and I felt the need to somehow get my story out—perhaps part of the healing process. I reached out to Defenders of Wildlife, on a tip from someone, as a viable organization that would be interested in what had happened. I emailed my story to them and they seemed very excited and sincere. But after several weeks of close contact I no longer heard back from them. Then a friend showed me a newspaper clipping about a fellow named Carter Niemeyer who was promoting his new book, “Wolfer,” up in Portland. With nothing to lose I contacted him and sent him my story. Carter ended up telling me about Brooks Fahy and Predator Defense. What a stroke of fortunate luck!

Brooks was extremely sympathetic and I felt I finally had the ear of someone who would put my story out. I came to realize that he was a true warrior in the fight to expose Wildlife Services, the agency that had caused myself and Bella so much harm. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brooks & Predator Defense for standing up for the wildlife that we should be respecting, not killing.

-I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brooks & Predator Defense for standing up for the wildlife that we should be respecting, not killing.

- Robert Norie & Bella
A FATHER SPEAKS FOR A FAMILY

"On March 16, 2017 our lives changed forever. As many of you know, my son Canyon Mansfield walked up the trail to his usual spot where he studied and prayed, just 300 yards from our home. However, on this day he would not get any homework done.

While playing fetch with Kasey, his best friend and my dog, he spotted a small sprinkler type device stuck in the ground. Curious, he bent over and began touching this foreign object. Kacey, being an extremely well trained lab completed a front heel placing himself straight across from Canyon with this thing in between them. Canyon, just 14, felt a wire spring on the side of this object and it clicked and slid. He jumped back and covered his face with his left arm as an orange, almond-smelling powder shot him in the face. With the sudden pop and shock of it all and the stinging in his eyes, Canyon inherently knew that something really bad had just happened. He ran to the spring snow, yet unmelted, and irrigated his eyes and face. Just as he began to come to his senses he heard the groans and moans of his best friend. As he looked over he witnessed the anaerobic suffering of a suffocating dog dying from the inside out. Kasey died violently with bloody foam coming out of his mouth while seizing. In just a few minutes he succumbed to the hydrogen cyanide gas as Canyon watched helplessly. In a matter of minutes, USDA Wildlife Services stole a member of my family and a piece of my son's innocence forever.

I received a call from my frantic son and I knew something unthinkable had just happened. I dropped everything and went to the place where Wildlife Services killed my dog and almost killed my son. We had the Sheriff’s Department and the Hazmat team to the house, but no one knew what this poisonous device was. Hours later the M-44 would be identified by an ex-trapper. At that time, and for the first time, I would dub the device a "cyanide bomb" because it was filled with a deadly material and designed to go off and to kill. But no one could help us—not the sheriff, not the emergency room physician, not even my medical education.

My wife Theresa and I felt helpless as Canyon experienced the worse headaches of his life for a month straight; they did not go away day or night. He had nausea and vomiting and numb hands. We talked with a regional toxicologist and he had to see a neurologist. He underwent a brain MRI and multiple blood tests. Our son suffered immensely. He did not sleep much for a month. He came to our room many nights when he had "attempted" to sleep in his room. All of this does not even begin to address the emotional burden that being sick weighs on a boy—not to mention seeing the shadows form in Kasey Mansfield’s eyes as his life left him. In the meanwhile the only peep anyone ever heard from Wildlife Services was their POLITICAL RELATIONS person commenting to various news organizations across the nation.

While nothing could be done for Canyon, who had been assaulted by a sub-lethal dose of cyanide, we searched for understanding of why someone would put a cyanide bomb by our home. Wildlife Services was nowhere to be found. We were very angry and hurt, mostly scared, lost and lacking in knowledge. In the meanwhile the media swarmed us like honeybees on a hive. We limited our exposure at first, due to our lack of understanding and our need to help our son. A few days later my career-long receptionist asked me if I had heard the "the guy from Oregon" back. I knew we were suffering. I said I had not and she looked at me empathetically, with tears in her eyes, and said, "I think this man can tell you what happened to you guys." Still angry and suspicious I instead asked my wife Theresa to call him back, and the rest is history. When I arrived home, Theresa told me of a man (Brooks Fahy of Predator Defense) who knew what happened to us and for what intended purpose—and that most of all, he cared.

Brooks helped us through a very emotional and unusual time that was completely foreign to us. He explained what the M-44 cyanide bomb was and why it was ridiculously placed by our home. He gently taught us the historical perspective of Wildlife Services and this indiscriminate device. Of course I didn't want to believe him and double-checked all that he said, and all that he said was accurate. The understanding that he gave us helped us through one of the most difficult times we have ever experienced in our lives. Though my son suffered badly, Brooks helped him to not lay victim of Wildlife Service. Instead he became a warrior against them. Without Brooks we would have been just another family of non-target casualties.

Over the last three years we have fought alongside Brooks to get cyanide bombs out of our nation. We have traveled to Washington, D.C. twice and all over the West, answering questions as panelists at the documentary made surrounding this incident, “Lethal Control.” Together we worked to introduce “The Chemical Poison’s Reduction Act” (aka “Canyon’s Law”) in the U.S. Congress with Rep. Peter DeFazio that will hopefully one day be passed. We have succeeded thus far in keeping M-44s out of Idaho and getting them permanently banned in Oregon. Cyanide bombs have also been withdrawn from public land use in Colorado and Wyoming.

After Oregon’s governor signed their ban into law, we all talked on the phone as Brooks drove home.

"Though my son suffered badly, Brooks helped him to not lay victim of Wildlife Services. Instead he became a warrior against them. Without Brooks we would have been just another family of non-target casualties.”

He was hesitant to celebrate; he wanted to talk about what was next. I encouraged him to stop and breathe in the fresh air, void of cyanide: “You did it Brooks! Enjoy this tonight. You can work tomorrow.”

"Lethal Control” at www.predatordefense.org/lethalcontrol.

Meet the Mansfields and others involved in this incident in the film “Lethal Control” at www.predatordefense.org/lethalcontrol.
For the last 30 years Predator Defense, under the leadership of Brooks Fahy, has worked tirelessly to end the federal government’s inhumane and counter-productive killing of wildlife through the Department of Agriculture’s rogue Wildlife Services program. Not only does this secretive agency tragically kill millions of wild animals each year -- including endangered species -- it also kills dogs and has come perilously close to killing humans.

Throughout the decades, Predator Defense has been a consistent force in bringing to light Wildlife Services’ unjustifiable activities. One of the most effective ways to enact change is through building relationships. Knowing this, Brooks has brought victims to Washington, D.C. to meet with members of Congress, successfully urging them to join my efforts to pass legislation to ban wildlife poisons and reform Wildlife Services. Most recently, Brooks accompanied the Mansfield family to D.C. after 14-year old Canyon accidently triggered an M-44 device while hiking behind their house with his beloved dog, Kasey. The cyanide from the M-44 caused Kasey to suffer an agonizing death in front of Canyon. Thankfully Canyon missed full exposure, or he would have been killed as well. Canyon still suffers from the effects of partial exposure to the cyanide. With Brooks’ guidance, knowledge, and compassion, the family has become powerful activists in the fight to ban M-44 devices.

Predator Defense has garnered major media coverage that has raised public awareness on the importance of banning M-44s. As a result, the devices have been banned in Oregon and are temporarily banned in Idaho and several other states, while work continues at the federal and state levels to ban them nationwide.

I have worked with Brooks since the founding of Predator Defense. Because of his determination and skill, it is an influential advocacy group I know I can count on. Congratulations on your 30th anniversary. I look forward to working with you in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress
I first met Brooks Fahy back in the 1980’s at my veterinary clinic near Portland. At that time he was working as a homebuilder, but he rescued and rehabilitated orphaned coyotes and other wild animals on the side.

Fast forward to 2011 when I was already retired from veterinary medicine and had moved to Central Oregon. Caring for mainly dogs and cats for decades (and occasionally treating wild birds), I obviously had a passion for animals. So it was an easy transition to my advocating for wildlife, with an emphasis on our wild carnivores like the wolf, coyote, cougar, and grizzly, which have been vilified for many decades. As letter-writing to protest what our wildlife agencies were doing to harm these top predators became almost a second occupation for me, I started joining multiple conservation groups for help on this.

Enter Predator Defense and Brooks. In 2011 when I initially connected with Predator Defense’s website, noticing that Brooks was its executive director, I just had to call him and ask him if he remembered me from almost 25 years ago. That call significantly connected me once again to Brooks, whose passion for our wild carnivores is unmatched. He is a trailblazer of sorts in a world of many reactive vs. proactive small and large nonprofits. His proactive “boots on the ground” philosophy of going directly to the source of the problem, whether it be a dog poisoned by contact with an M-44 cyanide device, an animal caught in a trap, or a wolf shot illegally or under suspicious circumstances, has always been his “modus operandi.” As director of Predator Defense, Brooks reforms outdated myths and unfounded beliefs about wild carnivores, and fights animal cruelty from the ground up, using science proven from peer-reviewed research conducted by wildlife biologists and ecologists, and using his own experience working hands-on with wildlife since he was a young boy.

Don’t laugh, but if I had to assign Brooks’ personality to a specific breed of dog (remember I am a veterinarian!), it would be a Border Collie...focused, alert, tenacious, intelligent, a non-stop analytical problem solver who fights 24/7 for the purpose of ending cruelty aimed at our wild carnivores and making coexistence with them a primary goal. Three decades of never giving up has awarded him significant wins. These include:

1. making award-winning documentary films where national exposure, even at the U.S. Capitol, publicized whistle-blowers’ exposés about animal cruelty promulgated by our own federal agencies, such as Wildlife Services;
2. achieving passage of a law banning M-44 use in Oregon;
3. his “dogged” determination to fight the cruelty of trapping; and
4. his unwavering upholding the right of wolves to live in the habitat they originally were a part of. This is evident in the state of Washington, where massive anti-wolf rhetoric is coming from the agricultural/ranching lobbyists, legislators, and state wildlife agencies who wish to delete the wolf from its rightful place in its former habitat.

Brooks, your unyielding soul to protect the rights of wild carnivores to exist, and for animals in general not to be harmed by cruel methods, touches and binds to my soul. Carry on for the animals!”

- Donna Harris, D.V.M.
“I first encountered Brooks and Predator Defense in 1996 when he asked me to review a 100-page report they’d produced that resulted from a 20-month lawsuit against the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife’s (ODFW) flimsy and unsubstantiated reports of cougar incidents. Brooks had documented that ODFW had never verified most of the incidents they reported to the media. Predator Defense released this report just before an election which included a ballot measure to once again allow hunting of cougars and bears with dogs. Brooks and I traveled around the state holding press conferences calling out ODFW’s lack of transparency, as well as their hyping a false and politically driven narrative to try and effect the outcome of a ballot initiative. It was the beginning of our long friendship. Having been a cougar researcher and advocate for sound cougar conservation for nearly 20 years, I was no stranger to the various organizations in North America that were seeking/begging for conservation informed by science, yet mindful of the “values” component so often missing (building on Aldo Leopold’s recognition of the “art and science” of wildlife management) in game agencies approach to cougars and other large predators. In Brooks I found not simply a starry-eyed advocate hoping to do good, but an individual that was phenomenally well grounded, pragmatic, tenacious, well-read on scientific literature, a wick-edly keen intellect and strategist. He always sees the long game. He never seems to tire, he constantly works to move the ball forward, even at times if the progress is only incremental. He understands forward momentum, no matter how small, is key to ultimate success. Brooks has an intensity that has served him, his organization and predator conservation, extremely well. He is not afraid to take on any issue or large industry he finds troubling and an affront to predators, wildlife, and strong stewardship (e.g., M-44 sodium cyanide and 1080 poisoning of wildlife and pets). He is to be commended for steering an outsized influence for a small organization in a way that changed how the public thinks of predators and increased their understanding of sound predator conservation.

As a predator scientist, my voice is best heard working with organizations like Predator Defense. This is a collaboration that has lasted nearly a quarter of a century and will continue as long as I can still provide value to their mission.”
"I had the pleasure of meeting Brooks around 10 years ago and have since spent many evenings emailing him and talking by phone, as well as meeting in person a few times. Brooks’ level of dedication to carnivores in North America is unparalleled; it has been a true labor of love. He isn’t afraid to butt heads with folks, including state wildlife agencies hell-bent on reducing or even eliminating native wildlife.

Brooks has single-handedly informed thousands of people of how “rigged the system” is in wildlife management, where hunting and livestock interests determine the fate of carnivore populations. In short, Brooks’ small, grassroots organization does more on the ground than many larger, more well-funded wildlife protection groups combined.

The name “Predator Defense” is synonymous with Brooks Fahy. He has spent 30 years defending our wildlife. Predator Defense has had many victories, including forcing the poorly named Wildlife Services to modify their lethal policies and state agencies to better protect growing predator populations. They have used science, sanity, and compassion to be an ever-present advocate for those who can’t speak for themselves. Hopefully Brooks will be here for another 30 years, speaking his mind, winning lawsuit after lawsuit, and seeing the fruits of his labor pay off with protected populations of predators living in even more areas of North America.”

"In 2013 the Washington State Legislature appointed and funded me as state leader for wolf livestock conflict research. In 2016, after I had radio-collared and monitored 764 livestock and 15 wolf packs, I reported that none (zero) of 11 “cooperating” ranches—those using nonlethal methods to prevent depredations—suffered any livestock losses to wolves. In fact, the average wolf predation rate statewide in wolf-occupied areas was 0.003 (or 1/3 of 1%).

However, one non-cooperating ranch, the Diamond M, had losses 20 times the state average because the rancher placed salt blocks on a wolf den site and refused to move salt and livestock away from the den during wolf depredations. My research team documented these facts on time-stamped video coverage of the den. After I reported these facts to the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), their Wolf Policy Lead contacted my boss, the Dean of Agriculture at Washington State University (WSU) and told him I was lying and that the Diamond M ranch did everything possible to prevent livestock depredations. These two then drafted and published a national press release claiming I was a liar and a fraud. I was subsequently investigated by WSU (and exonerated!) for scientific fraud, illegal use of state resources, and fiscal misappropriation. Despite being exonerated of all false charges made by WDFW and WSU, I lost my reputation, position as full professor, and my world-renowned research laboratory. I am now unemployed.

Throughout this sickening ordeal Brooks Fahy and Predator Defense stood by my side and publicly defended me and my scientific findings. Other so-called wolf advocacy organizations that were members of WDFW’s Wolf Advisory Group (WAG), stood idly by and said nothing as I was being dragged through the mud and wolves were being killed by WDFW. One group, Conservation Northwest, actually joined the defamation chorus and publicly denounced me as a liar to the press. Only Brooks and Predator Defense stood up for wolves, science, and my research lab... If you care about wolves and the scientific truth, support Predator Defense.”

"Only Brooks Fahy and Predator Defense stood up for wolves, science, and my research lab... If you care about wolves and the scientific truth, support Predator Defense.”
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR, cont. from page 1

It is worth noting that no other environmental or conservation organizations called Washington to task in this way. The ads weren't cheap, but we think they were worth it, as your voice combined with our ads got Governor Jay Inslee's attention very quickly. Less than a week after our first ad, Inslee asked the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Commission to prioritize nonlethal management of wolves. (In technical terms this means he directed the WDFW Commission Chair to initiate a new rule-making process to achieve nonlethal management outcomes.) We applaud the letter Inslee sent to WDFW, but need to make sure you know it is ultimately only an “ask.” He cannot legally mandate that WDFW adopt specific policies. A majority of the Commissioners must vote to do so and intense public pressure will again be imperative. We will report back as that unfolds.

What Inslee asked for was also in the future—policy changes before the 2021 grazing season. Meanwhile, there were still kill orders out on members of the Leadpoint and Togo Packs. So we urged you to help us speak out to stop the killings and you did. And the kill orders were called off. Thank you again! Together, we saved lives and set better ways in motion.

Food for Thought: Hope Is Not a Feeling. It Is a Discipline.

We recently ran across the statement above and have been taking it to heart. We never dreamed we’d be celebrating our 30th year in the middle of a pandemic and an unrelenting political horror show. Between the constant assault on our environment, democratic principles, and the rule of law, this year hasn’t felt like much of a party. It would have been easy to give up hope.

But we have 30 years of experience in persevering. We’ve seen the results of disciplining ourselves to effect positive change. So we insist on celebrating the good things that have happened. And at the highest level we can emphatically say that public awareness of the importance of native predators has grown, as has public understanding of the insanity of America waging a war on wildlife under the guise of public safety and livestock protection. It was also reassuring to see people turning out to vote in the presidential election at unprecedented levels. Even more encouraging, the majority spoke out for the changes we desire.

We must stay strong, focused and persistent to rid ourselves of the malignant forces that do not want a better world. We hope you will help sustain our efforts to this end by making a tax-deductible donation today. (NOTE: We will be sending out all mandatory tax acknowledgments for 2020 donations meeting the IRS threshold before the January 31, 2021 deadline and are working to send all other thank you letters shortly thereafter.) Thank you so very much for your voice and your support. We are incredibly glad to have you with us.

For all that is wild and free,

Brooks Fahy, Executive Director

We Wish You a Healthy, Hope-Filled Holiday Season