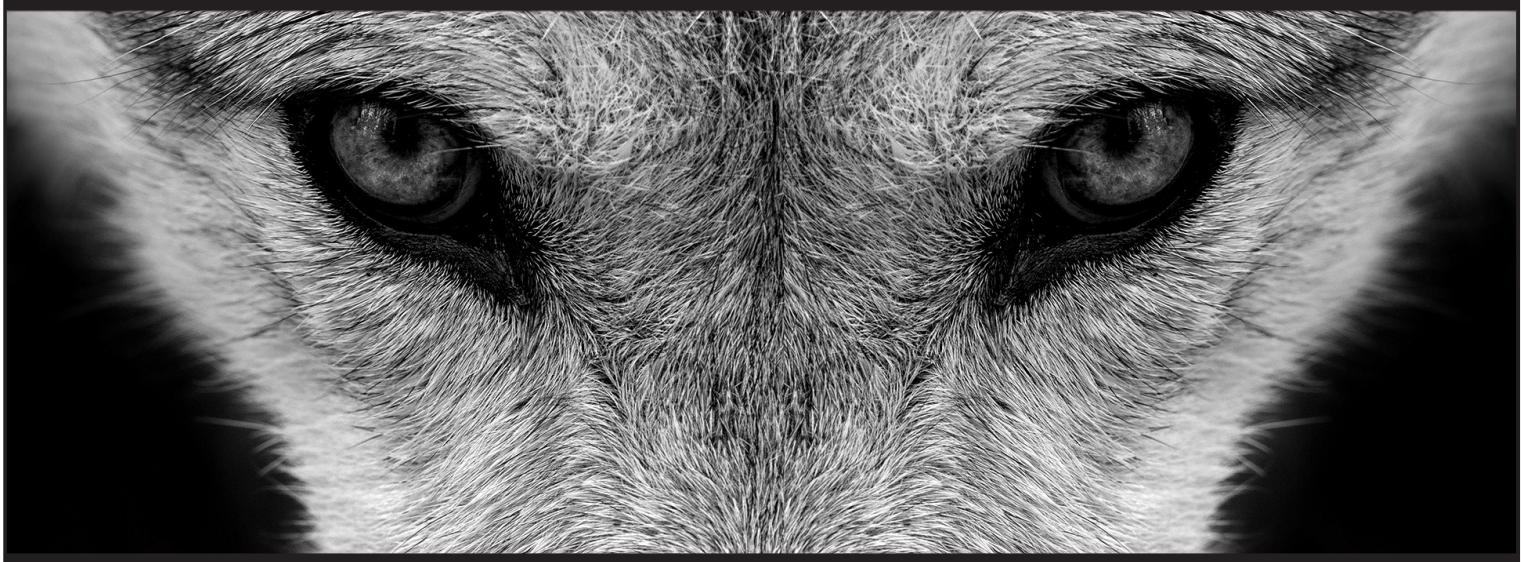
PREDATOR DEFENSE: 1990-2025

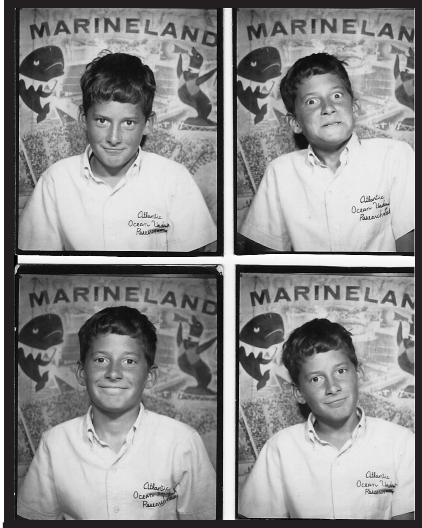


Championing our essential native predators with science, sanity and heart

Celebrating **35** years!

Our anniversary inspired us to dig deeper into our origins, where we found these fun pictures of our executive director, Books Fahy, at age 11 in 1965. That's when he started his first nonprofit to protect wildlife—the Atlantic Ocean Underwater Research Lab (name on shirt).

ORIGINS & INSPIRATIONS, pgs. 3-5



Dear Friends Old and New,

It's hard to believe Predator Defense has now been around for 35 years. I must admit, there have been many times over the decades when I felt overwhelmed and burned out and had long conversations with myself weighing the pros and cons of continuing. But once you become aware of the atrocities committed against wildlife, it's hard to erase them from your mind and do nothing, and at the end of the day it came down to one thing—being able to live with myself. I simply had to try to keep defending those who could not defend themselves.

JANE GOODALL: THE ULTIMATE INSPIRATION, pg. 2

In this anniversary newsletter I want to give you a little insight into what inspired me, what led to the founding of Predator Defense. You'll find key insight on pgs. 2-5. We also want to let you know what we've been working on lately—the efforts your generous support and words of encouragement sustain. As you can imagine, this year we have primarily been focused on stopping a regime hell-bent on gutting all possible protections for people, wildlife, and public lands.

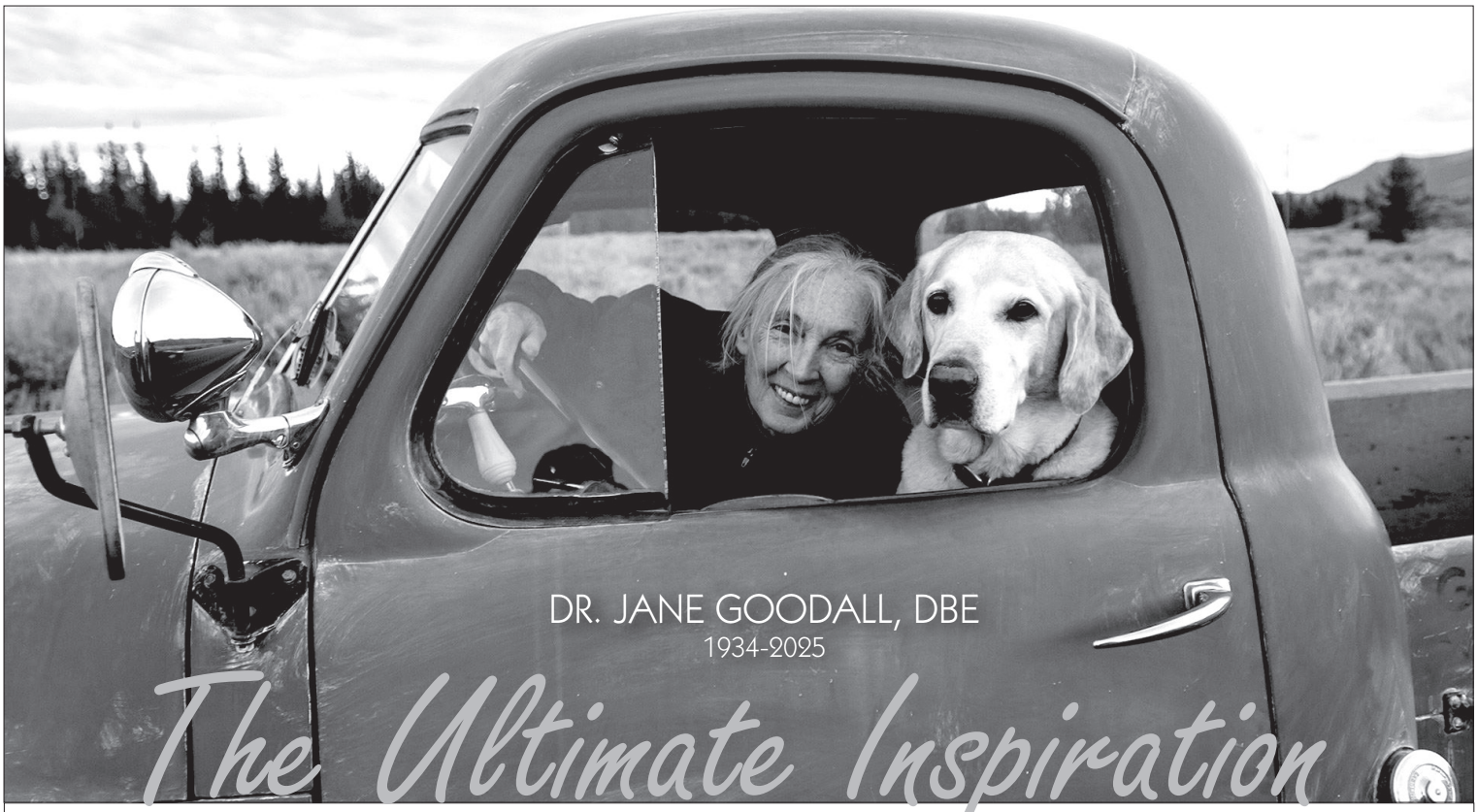
Furthering Bill to Ban M-44 Cyanide Bombs, While Rebuffing Rollbacks

As most of you know, M-44 cyanide bombs are poison devices set by wildlife agents in a cruel and delusional attempt to control native predators. Because M-44s are indiscriminate, they have killed countless thousands of dogs and nontarget wildlife over the decades and poisoned many people. It is only a matter of time until one kills a child. We continue to push forward on Canyon's Law (H.R. 4180/S. 2179), the federal legislation to ban M-44s on all public lands. Full movement toward bill passage is not possible at the moment, but we continue to get additional Congressional sponsors (just, unsurprisingly, no Republicans). We're also currently working to stop the rollback of our incredible 2023 win—the ban we achieved on all 245 million acres of BLM lands. Our work to ban M-44s continues on multiple fronts.

Pushing Forward to Protect Northern Rocky Mountain Wolves via Relisting

In August 2025 we reported an incredible win for wolf protections and for science: a federal district court in Missoula ruled that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (UFSWS) violated the Endangered Species Act (ESA) when it determined in 2024 that gray wolves in the western

— *See* LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR *on page 6*



- Photo by Tom Mangelsen, mangelsen.com

Dr. Jane Goodall was my ultimate earliest inspiration and key to why I became a wildlife advocate. From the first time I saw her on the cover of *National Geographic* in 1965—the magazine my brother and I fought over—I followed her amazing life researching chimpanzees in Tanzania. What struck me most was how she respected and related to the animals she was researching and how she didn't identify them with cold numbers; she gave them names! At the time this was a big "no-no," considered anthropomorphic by the male-dominated scientific community. Yet it was Jane relating to the animals she was studying as equals, instead of something beneath her, that drew me in.

What I learned from her was not how different we are from the animal kingdom, but how similar we are. Early on she blasted conventional thinking that animals weren't sentient, didn't have emotions or use tools. Her research inevitably led to her profound activism to protect animals and nature as a whole. Her sensitivity and dedication to the plight of this planet's creatures taught me about empathy and how, without it, we're doomed.

Never did I dream as a child that my future work to help animals and save wildlife would be recognized by Jane. But in the late 1990s, the advance team at the Jane Goodall Institute reached out and asked if we'd be interested in tabling at a talk she was giving at the Hult Center in Eugene, Oregon. We jumped on the opportunity and got there early to set up a table with our handouts. We immediately noticed her table was set up right next to ours. Little did we realize she would be there herself signing posters and books after her talk, and to our surprise she stayed and chatted with us for over an hour about her incredible work. We were also able to tell her about the battles we faced with the U.S. government's slaughter of predators like coyotes in the western states. I was stunned by how much she already knew and how genuinely interested she was in our efforts. Of course this was part of what made her remarkable. She helped and supported so many organizations all over the world.

> "You must stay optimistic for the future, because if we lose hope and let apathy guide us, then we are a lost cause already."
>
> ***- Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE***

Over a decade later Jane would come into our lives once again when world-famous wildlife photographer Thomas Mangelsen asked her to watch our film, "EXPOSED: USDA's Secret War on Wildlife." She then wrote us a testimonial, which said:

"I have just watched EXPOSED, and two emotions vie with each other: First, horror that cruelty of this magnitude and scale has been perpetrated, for so long, in the name of the American government. And second, great admiration for the brave men who, jeopardizing personal safety and future employment, spoke out against the atrocities that they saw perpetrated, and admitted having perpetrated themselves. This is the 21st Century. There is indisputable evidence that we are not the only beings on planet earth to know mental and physical suffering. For years I have heard stories of this kind of barbaric behavior – and now Americans will learn, through watching "EXPOSED," of the unforgivable actions of those who have exercised their power to cause untold agony to thousands of innocent fellow creatures on our planet. Congratulations to all involved in making this documentary. I hope it will be watched by millions."

Losing Jane during this time in history hurts deeply, but I am so grateful to her. True to form, she stayed busy advocating right up to her passing. In her final interview, slated to be aired after her death, she said something that touched me deeply:

"You must stay optimistic for the future, because if we lose hope and let apathy guide us, then we are a lost cause already."

Thank you for the great gift of your presence among us, Jane. Rest in peace.

- Brooks Fahy, Executive Director

Read photographer Tom Mangelsen's article on meeting Jane at yellowstonian.org/the-spell-of-jane-goodalls-magic.

MY DEFENSE OF WILDLIFE STARTED IN THE WATER

Origin Stories

- Brooks Fahy, Executive Director

My earliest memories as a child involve being around dogs, cats, and horses, and spending endless hours in the bays and marshes near my home on the Jersey Shore. I knew early on that animals were very important to me. When I was around three, I witnessed an act of cruelty that so profoundly affected me it drove me to lifelong work to end animal suffering. Several teenagers had found a garter snake and were slowly torturing it to death by flinging it through the air and throwing it against the sidewalk. Its final death came as they threw the poor snake under the wheels of a bus passing through town. It's as vivid a memory today as the day it happened. Their cruelty to this poor snake deeply affected me. I knew it was wrong, but I was too young and small to stop it.

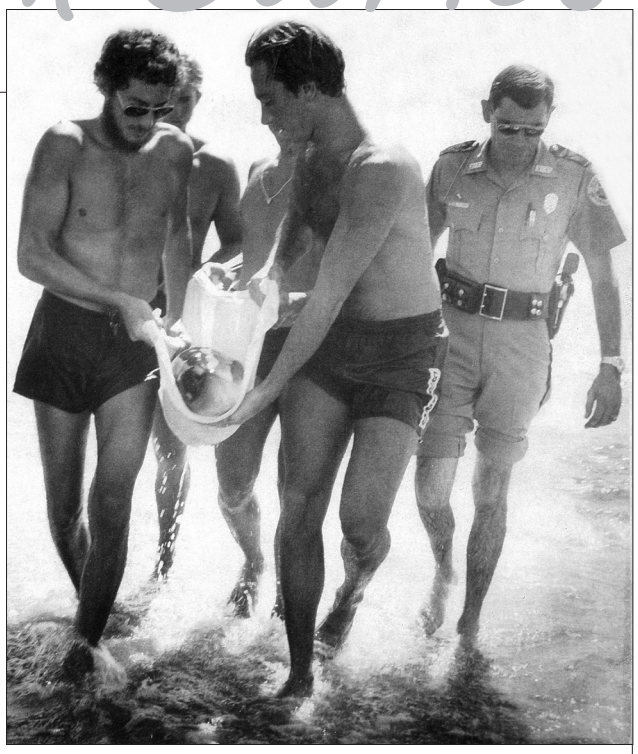
When I was 11, around the same time I was so inspired by Jane Goodall (see tribute on pg. 2), I was inspired even further by famous oceanographer Jacques Cousteau that I start my first organization to help save the oceans and their inhabitants. I called it Atlantic Ocean Underwater Research Lab. I was struck by how Cousteau and his wonderful family related to the planet and life on as critically important and in great need of protection. Other people who had a powerful impact on me growing up were Joy and George Adamson, as depicted in the 1966 movie, *Born Free*. After watching it, I knew I wanted to be just like them.

My inspiration to specifically fight for land-based predators can be traced to an article I read in *People* magazine in the 1970s about a U.S. government, Animal Damage Control trapper named Dick Randall, who had documented the cruelty his job entailed and was deeply bothered by it. His photography showed coyotes, bobcats and eagles that had been caught in his traps, burned alive in dens, poisoned by M-44 cyanide bombs, and poisoned by Compound 1080 baits dropped from aircraft over large areas of the west to kill coyotes. These images disturbed me deeply. In the years ahead I would be dealing with the same thing with the exception being that I was fighting to save these animals, not killing them. This cause would become the central focus of our work. Randall gave us permission in our early years to use his images to help make politicians and the public aware.

I also found inspiration in Dian Fossey, whose groundbreaking studies of gorillas changed the way we look at these remarkable animals. She was keynote speaker when I attended the annual Humane Society conference in San Diego in 1984 and I was lucky enough to meet her. She was incredibly friendly, just like Jane, and my friends and I got to spend hours with her for several evenings during happy hour at the hotel bar. Tragically, just a year after the conference, she was murdered in Rwanda due to her anti-poaching efforts.

In 1990 I opened a nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation center for predators called Cascade Wildlife Rescue that was renamed Predator Defense in 1995 as it transitioned away from hand-on rescue and more fully more into advocacy. I had funded my earlier wildlife work through my income as a contractor. Little did I know how dramatically creating a nonprofit would affect my life. But my aim was to be a strong advocate for predator species, knowing these animals were virtually powerless to protect themselves.

In 1992 I had the good fortune of meeting U.S. Representative Peter DeFazio, who had heard we were fighting the aerial gunning of wolves in Alaska and wanted to also do something about it. DeFazio's staff asked if I'd be interested in attending a press conference with him and Barry Lopez, the legendary author of *Of Wolves and Men*. This would mark the beginning of a 30-plus-year friendship. While DeFazio retired from Congress in 2023, we stayed in touch and he remains very supportive of our efforts.



Rescue of beached pigmy sperm whale in 1974 at Delray Beach, FL. (Brooks Fahy pictured at left.)

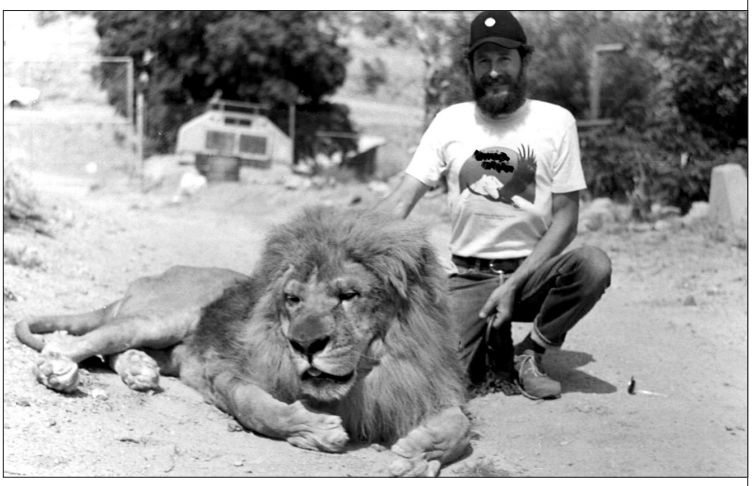
Brooks Fahy at age 11 in 1965 wearing shirt for his first nonprofit, the Atlantic Ocean Underwater Research Lab.

Wildlife Inspirations

HELPING INJURED & ORPHANED ANIMALS

Brooks Fahy's hands-on work helping injured and orphaned animals from the 1970s onward exposed him to egregious abuses by wildlife agencies and led him to realize that a major overhaul of wildlife policies is essential. His founding of the nonproft Cascade Wildlife Rescue in 1990 filled a critical need for quality rehabilitation for predators like bears, bobcats, cougars, coyotes, and foxes. It was also an active voice for predator species protection. Over time, finding suitable release sites for rehabilitated animals became increasingly difficult and public management policies were failing to protect predators and their habitat. The rampant use of predator control methods such as leg hold traps, poisons, snares, aerial gunning, bounties, and designated hunting seasons was profoundly impacting existing populations and undermining second chances for rehabilitated animals. In 1995 the rehab center was closed and the nonprofit was redirected with a new name, Predator Defense, to focusing on protecting predator species more broadly.

PHOTOS COUNTER-CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Brooks Fahy in 1985 holding orphaned coyote pups, rescued after their parents were killed by USDA Wildlife Services. Tending to orphaned black bear cub in 1987. Freeing bobcat in 2012 by cutting away illegally set snare; the bobcat ran to freedom at lightning speed. Enjoying daily exercise and grooming time with an African lion in 1987 while working at Wildlife Waystation in CA.



In Appreciation A VERY SPECIAL THANKS

Key Scientific Inspirations

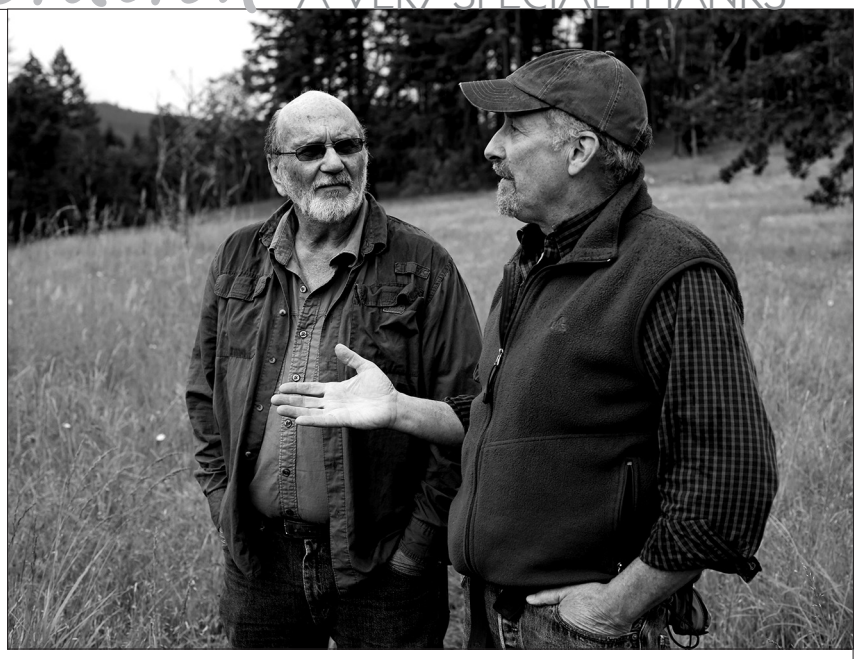
You could write books on how the scientific knowledge of the following individuals has contributed to our efforts over the decades. (And citing all their credentials would entail a standalone newsletter!) We consider all to be great friends and are deeply indebted to them.

Marc Bekoff, Ph.D. - pioneer of compassionate conservation and collaborator with Jane Goodall
Joy Belsky, Ph.D., *In Memoriam* - one of first female rangeland ecologists; key early mentor
Robert Crabtree, Ph.D. - conservation biologist and leading authority on coyote/wolf behavior; longtime advocate for Wildlife Services reform
Rick Hopkins, Ph.D. - conservation biologist and authoritative, ground-breaking cougar researcher
John Laundré, Ph.D., *In Memoriam* - legendary conservation biologist and renowned cougar researcher
Paul C. Paquet, Ph.D. - world-renowned large carnivore conservation biologist
Jonathan G. Way, Ph.D. - conservation biologist and eastern coyote (aka coywolf) authority
Robert Wielgus, Ph.D. - conservation biologist and renowned North American large carnivore expert
George Wuerthner, M.S. - rangeland ecologist, prolific writer, and indomitable activist
Jim Yoakum, M.S., *In Memoriam* - first wildlife biologist hired by BLM; early mentor on predator/prey relationships

Irreplaceable Longtime Allies

The individuals listed below have contributed in irreplaceable ways to our efforts over the decades, whether by legal and political advice or by strategic insights, support and inspiration. We consider all to be great friends and are deeply indebted to them.

David Atkin, nonprofit attorney who has helped guide us for 35 years
Cheri Briggs - cofounder and president of Predator Defense; lifelong activist for wild and domestic animals
Tim Coleman - activist and key wolf ally; director of the Kettle Ridge Conservation Group
Diana Cornelius - board member and ally
Peter DeFazio – former Oregon Congressman; staunch ally for predator protection and Wildlife Services reform
Donna Harris – veterinarian, advisor and activist
Bea Johnson – board member and activist
Sally Mackler – advisor and lifelong activist for wild and domestic animals
Jeff Picton – exceptional colleague in early wildlife rehabilitation center work
Pam Round – communications director and glue that holds Predator Defense together



PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM: John Laundré (L) and Brooks Fahy (R) during 2016 interviews for film on the "killing agencies." Fahy with Rob Wielgus (Ctr) and Tim Coleman (R) at 2018 screening of film on Washington wolf slaughter. Fahy with Rep. Peter DeFazio (L) in 2013 after interviewing him for film "EXPOSED: USDA's Secret War on Wildlife."

SPEAK OUT NOW TO PROTECT THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT!

Public Comments Help Delay Damage, Bolster Record for Lawsuits & Restoration

The current power brokers are working to bring back regulations that would remove key protections for species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), our nation's most successful and essential conservation law. The proposed rule changes, open for public comment until December 22, 2025, are the same dangerous plans that sparked a nationwide outcry in 2018-19, when over 800,000 public comments poured in, pushing the Biden administration to restore the ESA. Polling in 2025 shows public support for the ESA has remained consistently high (84%) for the past 30 years. It is imperative that we translate this into an enormous show of opposition.

While we know the Trump administration doesn't care about public comments, sending a huge number of them will still slow the review process. Delaying finalization is a meaningful tactic that keeps stronger protections in place longer. We can leverage this opportunity to publicly hammer how the Trump administration is serving the interests of billionaire donors, out of touch with the public and even his voters. This will also bolster the public record for use in future lawsuits, contribute to the larger narrative that inspires political change, and help secure new future leaders that will restore and strengthen the ESA.

We are part of the Endangered Species Coalition, which is facilitating submittal of public comments. Please submit your comment by Dec. 22 at **endangered.quorum.us/campaign/148647**.

PREDATOR DEFENSE

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Predator Defense is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible per IRS guidelines.

History shows we blame predators for problems humans have caused.

Help us right this wrong.
Support our work at
www.predatordefense.org.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR, *cont. from page 1*

U.S. do not warrant federal protections. That meant the USFWS finding that gray wolves in the West do not qualify for ESA listing was vacated and the agency must make a new decision consistent with the ESA and best available science. It could ultimately bring an end to the killing spree in the Northern Rockies (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, eastern Washington/Oregon), areas Congress took off the ESA in 2011. However, this is contingent on wolves remaining listed under the ESA (see sidebar). We were co-plaintiffs in this lawsuit filed by the Western Environmental Law Center. Its current status is that parties have agreed on a proposed briefing schedule (yet to be submitted and approved by the Ninth Circuit). As it now stands, the Feds and intervenors would file their opening briefs on Feb. 27, 2026 and our answer brief would be due in spring of 2026. A hearing is expected next summer or fall.

Stopping a New Wolf Slaughter in Washington State

In recent months we became aware of the urgent need to stop the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) from slaughtering more wolves in the northeastern corner of the state, where they were trying to fully eliminate yet another family called the Sherman Pack on behalf of an infamous ranching family. In October we worked with Washington Wildlife First and Kettle Range Conservation Group to secure a temporary restraining order which prevented the state from aerial gunning one of the two adult wolves left in the pack. If the state had succeeded, this would have left only one adult female to care for pack's four to six pups. We are currently building up funds so we can take legal action quickly without having to scramble. Roughly 70 percent of the 51 state-endangered wolves WDFW has slaughtered since 2021 were killed on behalf of the McIrvin family who owns the Diamond M. Ranch and runs their cattle over thousands of acres of U.S. Forest Service lands. For a little history on this issue, check out our 2018 film, "The Profanity Peak Pack: Set Up and Sold Out" at **predatordefense.org/profanity**. It's just as pertinent today.

Hope Is a Discipline. Be Relentless in Practicing It.

In the political horror show, with its unrelenting assault on our environment, democratic principles, and the rule of law, it would be easy to give up hope. But our 35 years of experience persevering has shown us that discipline in holding out hope is essential to effect positive change. We also insist on celebrating a baseline fact—the vast majority of the public is now aware of the importance of native predators and the insanity of America waging a war on wildlife under the guise of public safety and livestock protection. That same public is more than fed up and repeatedly rising up. The November 2025 election results and many state and local races show this to be true.

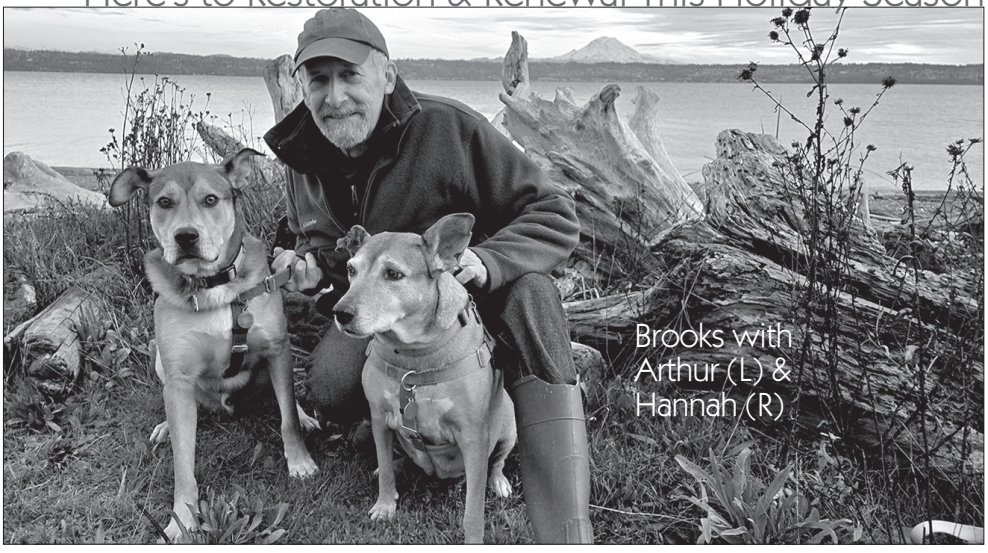
We thank you for everything you are doing to save our country and our wildlife. Your voice and your support sustain our efforts and we are incredibly glad to have you with us.

For all that is wild and free,

Brooks Fahy

Brooks Fahy, Executive Director

Here's to Restoration & Renewal This Holiday Season



Brooks with Arthur (L) & Hannah (R)