

Compassion & Charity

Wayne Pacelle and the same old animal-rights activists attempt new “humane” attacks on producers.

By Dave Skinner

In early August came reports of a lawsuit brought to stop Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) from killing off the proven-predacious “Old Profanity Pack,” which is reported to have eaten through at least part of a million bucks’ worth of cows owned by rancher Len McIrvin’s Diamond M in northeastern Washington.

The plaintiff is not the two groups leading the noisy, vulgar, trending-toward-violent “campaign” to “save” the Profanity wolves (the Center for Biological Diversity and Inland Empire Public Lands Council, aka “Lands Council”), but another group just months old, the Center for a Humane Economy in faraway Maryland.

In late July, CHE had already bought full-page newspaper ads opposing wolf control, not in the Spokane or Colville newspapers, but in the *Seattle Times*, which circulates on the “left” side of Washington’s Cascade Curtain, between conservative inland Washington and the enlightened coastal Seattle metropolis.

As for the lawsuit itself, the case was not brought in Ferry County where the wolves are, and not even in eastern Washington, but in King County (Seattle) Superior Court on behalf of two unnamed Seattle residents. Why? Well, in Washington, local state judgeships are filled by local, “nonpartisan” elections. Can you say venue shopping, not only for a judge but for plaintiff “standing”? Good for you!

So, with yet another “group” parachuting into northeast Washington’s wolf war from thousands of miles away, the question becomes, who the heck are these people and how can they do this? Turns out, less than a minute after asking that question, the question becomes, who the heck is this guy? And *RANGE* readers, as well as just about every livestock producer in America, already know the answer. None other than Wayne Pacelle.

Mr. Pacelle, of course, is too well-known to ag producers as the longtime executive director of the Humane Society of the United

States, America’s biggest animal-rights “non-profit,” with \$137 million in 2017 revenues, twice that of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. For further comparison, the Sierra Club’s revenue in 2017 was \$153 million, of which \$62 million came from the Sierra Club *Foundation* just across the Bay Bridge. And even though most don’t think of HSUS as an environmental group, it so happens that one HSUS board member is Joshua S. Reichert, longtime managing director of Pew Trusts’

CHE is another iteration of the “boycott, divestment, sanctions” movement, which is itself a more-radical version of “socially responsible investing.”



Wayne Pacelle and Beverly Kaskey arrive at the 2013 Genesis Awards Benefit Gala at the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles on March 23, 2013.

“Environment Group.”

Indicative of Pacelle’s high rank in the nonprofit world is his 2017 compensation, \$425,000, the most among 15 HSUS leaders raking down six figures plus.

Early in 2018, of course, Mr. Pacelle got #MeToo-ed, departed from HSUS, replaced by a lady who’d gotten another HSUS boss fired for discrimination way back in 1995....

So, Wayne has popped up again as press spokesperson, front man and president of the Karner Blue Center for a Humane Economy. Karner blues, of course, are endangered butterflies endemic to the Indiana Sand Dunes east of Chicago. “Humane Economy”? That’s the title of Mr. Pacelle’s latest book, published in 2016.

CHE has a website bragging that it is the

“first nonprofit animal welfare organization that focuses on influencing the conduct of corporations to forge a humane economic order.” Translated, that means CHE is another iteration of the “boycott, divestment, sanctions” movement, which is itself a more-radical version of “socially responsible investing” (SRI), both of which boil down to buying stocks in companies not only for a return, but also to change “incorrect” into “correct” corporate policy. So “the Center engages with stakeholders through direct dialogue, advocacy letters, shareholder proposals, social media and strategic campaigns.”

Or hopes to. CHE also explains it was “incorporated in Maryland on Nov. 20, 2018, as a nonprofit entity and has filed Form 1023 with the Internal Revenue Service to obtain tax-exempt status pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.” Apparently, the IRS zipped the Center through the process, with donors being told the “Center’s tax identification number is 83-2620507.”

How will it be funded? Well, that’s where the other two people at the Center with Mr. Pacelle come in, Vicki Benjamin and Andrew Niebler, both titled “executive vice president.” Both are veterans of Calvert Investment Management, which until recently was

an SRI investment house with over \$13 billion in the portfolio. Calvert developed a set of investment principles that included, among many others, a prohibition against investing in firms that “abuse animals, cause unnecessary suffering, or whose operations involve the exploitation or mistreatment of animals.”

The trouble is, Calvert, founded in 1976, is shutting down because, according to *Pensions and Investments*, the company “improperly used mutual fund client assets to cover nearly \$18 million in distribution and marketing costs, and that it paid expenses above the mutual funds’ expense caps from January 2008 through December 2014.” So much for ethical investing, mmm?

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) forced the sale of Calvert’s assets to

"WE NEVER SAID WE FUNDED ANIMAL SHELTERS."

Wayne Pacelle, President and CEO,
Humane Society of the United States



© 2014 WYATT & CHEN-WALSH

For over two decades, American media have presented Wayne Pacelle as a handsome, "humane" ideal. The reality that HSUS isn't the "humane society" that operates your local shelter, but is an animal-rights group first and foremost, is little reported. As for photographs, there are hundreds of red-carpet-gala images of Mr. Pacelle similar to that on the previous page. But what America will never see is the one they should see: An intimate, candid close-up of Mr. Pacelle and one of his hundreds of "celebrity" companions crouching down on red grass to caress an eviscerated calf.

another brokerage, Eaton Vance, while Ms. Benjamin, an employee whistleblower, was appointed to wind down Calvert.

What next? Karner Blue Capital, LLC, co-founded by Ms. Benjamin and Mr. Niebler, formerly Calvert's general counsel. Last spring, *Washington Business Insider* reporter Anthony Medici introduced the LLC as a "new investment fund that grades companies on how well they treat animals."

Why? On her F6S listing, a networking website that "founders" use to raise dough for start-ups, Benjamin wrote that "not one of the top 50 SRI firms offered services that are focused on enhancing animal welfare."

Therefore, as Medici reported, Karner Blue is offering a "vegan" investment product, and "[w]hether it's through proxy voting or shareholder resolutions, the investment firm will look to engage with companies and influence how they treat animals."

How objective will Karner Blue's methodologies be? Well, of three firms approved by Karner Blue, JUST Inc. brags that its fake egg products "have displaced enough egg purchases to have spared a few million hens the

misery of battery cage confinement." And Ms. Benjamin's LinkedIn page notes that she "traveled to the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota to raise awareness around the Dakota Access Pipeline."

Medici reported Benjamin hopes to have "\$50 million to \$100 million in assets by the end of the year [2018], with an ultimate goal of having \$1 billion in assets in five years. Investors can put in as little as \$4,000 to participate," but, interestingly, Medici notes Ms. Benjamin has "self-financed the company and has not drawn any salary."

Keep in mind that as an SEC whistleblower, Ms. Benjamin should have collected between 10 and 30 percent of the funds collected in "enforcement actions" against Calvert, a share of \$3.9 million minimum, or between \$390,000 and \$1.17 million before, ahem, taxes. Not bad.

How to build the clientele and asset base? Well, Mr. Niebler's LinkedIn shows he follows the Good Food Institute, which is all about "cell-based meats and other proteins that are expected to replace animal husbandry." He also follows Veg Society of DC for "your

health, the animals, the planet." He apparently gave a Karner Blue sales pitch on "investing with vegan values" at the DC Vegan New Deal Cafe in Greenbelt, Md., which serves an "accessible, plant-based, Italian-American menu." This event's Meetup listing mentions "ideas on how individuals can invest money with vegan values in mind."

As of April 2019, in a *Business Journal* follow-up, Mr. Medici reported that Pacelle had joined the LLC as a "partner," and the LLC would be "pressuring companies to do better by animals and using some of the proceeds to fund charitable work." Mr. Medici also reported that Karner Blue had raised \$750,000 from "investor and silent partner" Fred Schaufeld, a venture capitalist and part owner of both the Washington Capitals and Nationals.

While that's well short of \$50 million, it was enough to fund the ads and the lawyers for the lawsuit—activities nobody except fans of Wayne Pacelle would dare call "charitable work." ■

Dave Skinner has hunted long enough to know that not all predators have fangs and four legs.