

ANIMAL WELFARE: Understanding What We See and What We Don't See

by James Beers, BS, MA

Writer, Speaker, and Consultant

Centreville, Virginia, USA

Retired Wildlife Biologist, Refuge Manager, & Law Enforcement Officer

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Submitted by Request to The Electronic Magazine of Veterinary Science & The Latin American Association of Animal Welfare

Author's Note. During my 30 plus years with the US Fish and Wildlife Service among many other assignments I worked at the New York Port-of-Entry as a law enforcement officer in the early 1970's where I was concerned with wild animal commerce and where I successfully investigated and obtained prosecutions in several large smuggling cases (one of which involved many South American pelts from giant otters, jaguars, ocelots, and margays being shipped to Europe). I have been a field wildlife game warden in four States and a US Congressional Fellow in Washington, DC working with the US Congress. During over 20 years that I was stationed in Washington, DC with the US Fish and Wildlife Service I served as the Operations Chief of the US National Wildlife Refuge System and as the Federal Wildlife Biologist in Washington, DC overseeing national wildlife research grants for things as diverse as finding biological controls for purple loosestrife and establishing a national wildlife information system.

However it was my final assignment that most prepared me to address this subject of Animal Welfare. For my last four years with the US government I served on US State Department and US Trade Representative delegations working with Canada and Russia to prevent Western European bureaucrats and animal rights groups from banning the importation of furs into Europe. Under the guise of Animal Welfare concerns I first became familiar with the international campaign to not only destroy the fur industry and trapping but also wildlife management, animal ownership, animal use, natural resource management programs worldwide, and the ability of families and communities to maintain their cultures and traditions.

Since my retirement in 2000 I have written and spoken all over the United States on the subject of animal welfare, animal rights, environmental proclamations, and their hidden agendas. My subsequent experiences and work have included a broad spectrum of Animal Welfare-related matters from a comprehensive report on a national Animal Rights Conference* and a study of government-caused pollution of the Potomac River to explaining pet-welfare claims meant to eliminate animal ownership and the widespread practice of large predators to discourage ranching, farming, and rural lifestyles. It is this perspective and experience that I bring to this paper.

I wish to express my thanks to the Electronic Magazine of Veterinary Science for their kind invitation to submit a paper on this topic. This is not a simple courtesy on my part; it is gratitude for the subsequent discovery that writing this paper has afforded me the challenge of presenting the historic and current

North American and Western European animal welfare experience (as best I understand it) to South American Veterinarians. Since our (North and South America) political and governmental systems cover such a broad variety, I found myself unable to use the USA-oriented vernacular and social conditions that are the usual terminology I employ for my readers.

Our political and social systems are not only different but the spectrum of political thought and trends in South American nations today is so wide to a non-political North American like me that it would be presumptuous for me to comment on it or try to write as though I understand the various perspectives at work in South America today. Equally, it would be wrong for me to presume to equate various bureaucracies or laws when the underlying concepts of private property or of national versus local control of various matters vary even more than the presence or absence of individual rights as we know them in the USA. Realizing this has forced me to look for more basic common ground to describe the moral and human freedom arenas that in turn are expressed in our governmental systems. I am sincerely trying to make this relevant to all veterinarians and people concerned with Animal Welfare regardless of their affiliations or persuasions.

Two contexts, morality and the politics that express societal morality, are the most basic and understandable dimensions I have chosen to facilitate this examination of the concept and significance of Animal Welfare in the summer of 2006. This challenge has forced me to expand my thinking and significantly deepened my own perceptions of the Animal Welfare phenomenon. It is this for which I am grateful to the Electronic Magazine of Veterinary Science.

—Jim Beers

*This Animal Rights Conference Report, Jim Beers' Resume, and an abundance of articles related to the matters mentioned in this paper may be found at <http://jimbeers.blogspot.com>

ABSTRACT

The author is a retired United States Fish & Wildlife Service wildlife biologist with a long history of working with Animal Welfare and related matters. In this monograph he defines Animal Welfare and then explores the laws and Treaties it has generated in the past 30 years in North America and in the United Nations. He then discusses the political and moral environments that both spawn and support the public commotion surrounding Animal Welfare in recent years. Under "Discussion" the author attempts to explain and categorize the hidden agendas and organizations behind Animal Welfare campaigns and the power they create. Finally, there are 12 questions and answers on matters of Animal Welfare that attempt to suggest how concern for animals does not necessarily mean having to support radical causes or the radical overthrow of society.

I. DEFINITION & BACKGROUND

When I mention Animal Welfare I mean: "Human perceptions regarding those things that affect wild and domestic animals". This runs the gamut from beliefs that cockfighting is "inhumane", or horses should not be slaughtered for any reason, or calves should not be slaughtered for veal to concern by rural dog owners about protected wolves that are killing and maiming their dogs; to urban anguish over large-scale die-offs of large wild animals, to the belief by hunters that dogs should be used for hunting to minimize lost or wounded animals, to rural people that believe wolves should be controlled lethally, to cockfighters that believe that this activity that

has been in their families for generations is legitimate and only the business of those that "own" the chickens. Such attention to the welfare of animals, both good and bad, is something that has always been with us. Certain members of any society have always found animal slaughter or even annual festivals where animals are used harshly to be repugnant while others either make their livelihood from such things or look forward to them and participate in them with eager anticipation throughout their lives.

The above definition admits to great latitude and interpretation. For instance we might be very concerned about a pit bull dog that gets loose in a city and attacks and kills neighborhood dogs and domestic animals or even a child while excusing the killing of dogs, livestock, and a child in a rural environment by wild wolves or cougars that government and environmental organizations tout as "natural" in rural areas. We may even "fault" the owners of the injured animals or the parents of the dead child for not being prepared better in the case of wolves while anguishing with them in the case of the pit bull. We may call for the elimination of hunting any animals because it is "cruel" while telling a shepherd that has just lost two dozen sheep and a horse to a protected grizzly bear (that left many of the sheep mangled, alive, and in pain for hours and a horse that still struggles in spite of a half-eaten rear quarter) that the losses are his fault and that he has to move his operation to accommodate the grizzly bear. We may call for ever-more strict government requirements to keep a dog, or call for laws to ban bobbing a dog's tail or cropping its' ears while ignoring the horrific attacks by protected wolves on pets, hunting dogs, and watchdogs. We may condone physically attacking and intimidating medical researchers and their families for testing medicine on animals while taking the tested medicine ourselves. We may ignore the criminal destruction of a mink farm business of struggling rural families while wearing leather shoes and belts. All this and much more falls under the heading of Animal Welfare.

The manipulative uses of "Animal Welfare" claims for hidden agendas also covers an almost infinite range. Young girls and their families may be emotionally over-wrought by the news that horses are sold by other owners to be slaughtered for pet food or human food or that some indigenous people or some Asians eat dogs or use their hides for products. Rich urban residents that seldom leave the city except on vacation may be very upset by pictures of animals being used in laboratories or animal in traps or hunters with deer or geese. Reports that circuses or rodeos train or use animals harshly upset a wide range of American society. Graphic descriptions of cockfights or turkey-raising facilities, claims of "animal rights", and predictions of criminal behavior by hunters appear almost daily in the media to generate financial and political support in the USA and Western Europe for organizations working for a radical overhaul of society. National and international groups like the Humane Society of the United States, Animal Protection Institute, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Defenders of Wildlife, and 20 to 30 other such groups make millions every year by exploiting the emotional aspects of these matters.

II. MANIPULATING ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERNS

The past 35 years have witnessed an explosion of environmental and animal-oriented laws in the USA and Western Europe, and United Nations' Treaties and Conventions that were justified in whole or in part on Animal Welfare claims.

- The UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) was composed and executed by First World and UN bureaucracies in the 1960's utilizing claims of the "cruel" and unjustifiable killing of such "charismatic mega fauna" as elephants and whales. It was signed by the USA in 1969. Indeed the International Whaling Commission was taken over during the same period (mid-1960's to mid-

1970's) by non-whaling nations at the behest of and with the financing of international animal and environmental organizations opposed to any whaling by asserting both insufficient population data and the basic unacceptability of killing such animals under any circumstances.

- UN Conventions ("Regulation of Whaling", "Antarctic Seals", "Living Resources of the High Seas", "North Pacific Fur Seals") and Agreements such as the "Conservation of Polar Bears" and various Fisheries Treaties concerned with marine mammals from whales and seals to porpoises and sea otters and polar bears. These inclusions were largely justified on the basis of photographs of young seals (white-coats) being harvested by Canadians on the ice and pictures of porpoises in tuna nets and whales being hauled onto a ship or being butchered.
- CITES was used as the basic justification for the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that was passed subsequently in the USA in 1969. This Act would not have been legally possible before USA ratification of CITES the same year. The USA Constitution says that ratified (by the US Senate and signed by the President) Treaties "become the law of the land". The USA courts have held that CITES was a "Treaty" and that therefore things that were previously illegal (taking private property without compensation and seizing State authority over plants and animals to name but two) were now new and supreme powers of the national government. The subsequent growth in power and authority at the national level over all facets of society has been spectacular. Because of the Billions of Dollars involved each year, national bureaucracies have grown dramatically, their ranks have been filled with "no-animal use" and "no-natural resource management" employees graduating from Universities that have long since abandoned teaching or researching or asserting anything that is not able to gain support from government funding. Scientific "facts" today reject long-proven animal and plant management and use regimes while extolling the "sacredness" of native plants and native animals, the need to "save" and "protect" plants and animals, such imaginary ideals as "Native Ecosystems" and such unachievable goals but bureaucratically wonderful tasks as the elimination of plants or animals that reportedly "arrived" after a certain date. Woven throughout this "science" are claims of "native" animals suffering such cruel fates as loss of their young and reduction of their range or numbers claimed to have existed varying periods ago. "Native" animal harm to other wild animals or domestic animals and indeed to human lives and property is ignored and even rationalized. Such rationalizations run the gamut of "people don't 'belong' there" and "she was menstruating" or "he tried to run" to "we are in 'their' habitat" and "that land should be owned by the government for nature".
- The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) was passed in the USA in 1976 subsequent to several UN Treaties that began the trend of placing marine mammals in an almost quasi-human category. As with the UN Convention (CITES) cited above and based on Animal Welfare photos and descriptions of seal, whale, and porpoise harvests and "takings" all marine mammals were given Federal or national protection in the USA, in USA waters, and in all commerce of the United States. While the law said, and supporters claimed, that such absolute protection would be lifted when "optimum sustainable populations" were achieved: 30 years later all marine mammals from high seas species to polar bears, manatees, and dugongs still enjoy absolute protection both from harvest, management and even research. Attempts to "delist" or renew sensible and sustainable management and use programs are never successful for marine mammals or declared Endangered Species as the proponents of such moves

are vilified and photos of baby seals and accusations of how proposed changes will lead to human criminality are heaped on proponents of management. The sole USA sealskin tannery was put out of business, Pacific salmon stocks are exploited today by overabundant seals and sea lions while fishing is curtailed and marine "sanctuaries" are declared, sea otters decimate abalone fisheries in California while overabundant killer whales decimate Alaskan sea otters, overabundant mink and other whale species and seals decimate North Atlantic fish stocks, while African seals decimate rock lobster fisheries important to local communities and struggling Third World nations. One need only consider the standard scenario. "See the baby seal on the ice; see the hunter kill the baby; pass the law to save the baby seal; close the tanneries and any commerce; lock up and fine anyone chasing a seal off their boat and don't even mention super-abundant seal populations as you close fisheries and declare marine sanctuaries due to a lack of fish". Was the purpose really the welfare of the "baby" seals or was it the closure of fishing and the elimination of boating?

***NOTE: As I was proofreading this paper for submission on 3 June 2006 the following news article appeared in the Washington Post newspaper:*

"Judge Rules Sea Lion Research Violates Laws - A judge has ruled the federal government must halt studies of threatened and endangered Steller sea lions because it did not properly assess how certain research techniques might harm the animals."

This item appeared only five days after a related news item regarding the widespread practice by doctors in England of recommending abortion for unborn children with a clubfoot that will be mentioned later in this monograph.

- The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) was also passed in the USA in 1976. This legislation was passed on a wave of media stories and concocted photos of laboratory animals and pets. Rabbits hooked up to wires in cages and dogs seized from old ladies that tried to "care for" dozens of animals as they and the ladies aged together were mixed with photos of starving horses (old animals mostly that no longer could keep any fat over their ribs) and "behind the scenes" reports of circus and rodeo animals and hyperboles about cockfights that were all woven together to concoct a very effective mix of calls for a new law to "control" certain things and "prohibit" others. University Committees financed under the law became magnets for advocates of no animal ownership or use. Government agencies began by "regulating" "puppy mills" with licensing, then they tightened regulations, then they required frequent inspections, and finally they established draconian penalties that put dog breeders out of business. City and county governments were encouraged to follow suit with similar regulations by the same Animal Welfare advocates and their organizations. "Rescue" leagues sprang up where certain dog breed owners took to "rescuing" unwanted dogs of their own or all breeds and then tried to find homes for them. Social and economic class divisions were exploited as fancy dog breed associations looked down on mongrel dog owners and cockfighters while elk-hunting foundations looked down on rabbit hunters and trappers as everyone talked about the need to cooperate while only looking out for themselves. Wild urban cats were sterilized and released at great cost to do little more than reduce male cat caterwauling during the night. Euthanizing domestic animals was rejected more and more as inhumane so that today everything from pumas to bears and moose that wander into towns and cities are not killed but (at great cost and futility as the problem either returns or just goes elsewhere) live trapped and transported and fawned over by the media and government agencies that always need "more money and people" for this

"growing" problem. As with the steady expansion of the ESA authority to cover more areas and more species and subspecies and races and populations and population segments and even the bizarre category of "distinct population segment", and the expansion of the MMPA to prohibit any marine mammal by-catch by fishermen or any control of species causing extensive harm to other species or human interests, so too the AWA has steadily expanded to cover more pet owners and veterinary services and medical experiments and eventually every animal user. For instance, it was always claimed that mice and rats would be exempt but they were recently brought under the auspices of the AWA as part of the incremental (and therefore little noticed by all but researchers) expansion of national government authority at the expense of State Constitutional authority, the rights of property owners, and the cultural and traditional heritages of citizens. As I write this I am just notified that 10,000 American pigeon-racers (and breeders and fanciers) have begun belatedly to fight being brought under the AWA where licensing and regulation and inspection are expected to do the same for them that it is doing to dog breeders.

III. POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal Welfare advocates have often attained significant political visibility. England under Queen Victoria in the 19th century saw a great deal of radical animal protection proposals and activism by groups under the banner of "anti-vivisectionists". Hunting, domestic livestock regulation, pet ownership and animal experiments for human medical purposes were all roundly attacked. Periodic noticeable outbreaks of this phenomenon were seen in Europe during the last century. One such period was the Nazi emphasis on "restoring Pre-Roman flora and fauna", Hitler's' repugnance for hunting and taxidermy, and various anti-meat-eating campaigns touted by celebrities and ephemeral "societies". It is however, the past 35 years that I would like to concentrate on for this description of Animal Welfare political impacts.

Animal Welfare and its shadow, Animal Rights (the belief that all animals share with mankind "inherent rights"), emerged as a political force in the USA in the late 1960's and early 1970's, a period of great social turbulence ("free love", anti-war movements, drug use explosion, and a belief that a "new age is dawning"). This is the period of the passage of the environmental and animal-related new laws cited above. "Animal advocacy" groups and "environmental" groups began publicity campaigns and evermore effective fund-raising drives that in turn created national political influence and the growth of new and expanded national bureaucracies to enforce and grow the reach of all the new laws. UN and European Union bureaucrats and delegates were likewise lobbied and benefited directly from this emerging phenomenon as evidenced by the Conventions and Treaties mentioned above and the proliferation of national and European Union laws and regulations concerning Animal Welfare during this same period. The result was somewhat like a snowball rolling downhill as these Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) and bureaucrats and politicians and University professors (who benefit from Billions in Federal grant dollars and international platforms for their specialties) all combine to expand governmental controls and governmental spending with a blizzard of claims and assertions that benefited only themselves at the expense of the populace.

In the USA and at UN environmental and animal-related meetings the same lobbyists appear representing all the same organizations year after year. As with attendance at Animal Rights Conferences in the USA all manner of NGO's (and their agendas) are represented. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) rail against trapping, fur, and pets while cautiously justifying radical criminal groups that destroy lives and property like the Earth Liberation Front and the Animal Liberation Front. Greenpeace touts the need to stop all management and

use of sea animals and nuclear power while the Animal Welfare Institute works to stop hunting and the Defenders of Wildlife lobbies to protect all large predators as a way to discourage rural living so that Wetlands and Wilderness groups can justify more government land acquisition and more controls of private property, people, and human pursuits. Clearly radical organizations such as those specializing in calls for the abolition of animal farming and medical experimentation on animals are always present on the fringes of these meetings as they seek openings and opportunities to attain their goals. The synergistic success of this 35 year-old alliance is apparent to anyone attending more than one of such meetings.

The results are steady and predictable. More UN authority over national natural resources such as wild animals, timber, and waterways and less sustainable use and management of those resources result from the Treaties and Conventions and implementing regulations and "Lists". More regimentation in the form of what is allowed and what is prohibited regarding human activities with animals worldwide is enforced and tightened by national governments. Animal use and the legal concept of animal ownership each erode steadily and that in turn strengthens national government authority claims over other property from wild plant and animal communities to human communities and human rights that are desired by powerful corporations or government administrators seeking powerful friends.

An example of the latter in the USA is that after 35 years of the national "taking" of private property without compensation under the ESA (a formerly illegal practice), the USA has begun experiencing a rash of government actions to force people from their homes against their will to give their land to corporations for development or other configurations desired by governments hungry for more tax income and rich land speculators hungry for profit.

The political support for these increasingly harmful activities has evolved alongside other abuses in the USA. Curiously, 35 years ago rich power brokers of the Right and radical socialists of the Left were the primary backers of the new laws that were resulting from the environmental and Animal Welfare hysteria in the USA in the 1960's and 70's. The rich power brokers saw it as a means to control the masses and isolate their landholdings while the socialists saw it as one of several means to remake society. This same political and moral combination caught the eye of GK Chesterton 100 years ago. He observed then in a collection of his essays (The Outline of Sanity) the thing we must keep in mind today. "What the two systems have in common is that ultimately they are both opposed to the widespread ownership of property. What the socialists do not tell us is that the natural result of their philosophy is that the government ends up owning all property and controlling every aspect of life along with it. And what the capitalists do not tell us is that the natural result of their philosophy is the same result as a game of Monopoly: one person owns everything, and everyone else owns nothing."

In very short order all politicians realized that these laws were harming only small, isolated groups at a time and no organized opposition was forming. By the late 1970's the strengthening and amending of these laws became a sure-fire way to get votes at election time. For instance, the MMPA was sponsored by a US Senator from a land-locked, interior state who liked to joke (privately) that he was just getting some needed "environmental" votes and the nice thing was "there wasn't any of those marine mammals within a thousand miles of any of my constituents".

Similarly, those harmed by these laws have proven unable to join together for any effective campaign to form an opposition. Dog owners look down on cockfighters and middle-class trappers find little common ground with

rich trout fishermen. Urban cat owners can see no common threat with medical experimenters and duck hunters only look confused when told of their stake in pending legislation to regulate rodeos or circuses. All the while, rich citizens with large landholdings and urban professionals send money and offer support to politicians and bureaucrats and organizations that will reduce rural residents' rights like dog breeders or control animal uses like pigeon racing that neither affect the rich, urban advocates nor anyone they know.

The last two decades have seen an almost total embrace of Animal Welfare and environmental changes by the Left in the USA by inclusion in political Party Platforms and integration with all of the other causes of the Left from abortion and same-sex marriage to gun control and bigger government. In Europe, when the Socialists were elected recently after the train bombings in Spain, proposals to ban bullfighting and to reduce hunting and gun ownership were almost immediate. European Union Leftist policies likewise have made it almost impossible for new members like Finland to control dangerous and damaging wolf and bear populations. In England the Labor government outlaws foxhunting and takes aim at pheasant hunting while half-heartedly protecting the few medical experiment company personnel left in Europe. (Most such employees have now moved to the USA where attacks on employees and homes and businesses are being countered with high-level prosecutions and prison sentences thus far.) However, as in the USA, the Right is largely silent, half-heartedly supportive, or opportunistic when they sense available voter support from "the middle", or they are acquiescent at election time to avoid the negative characterizations. Again the point being there are no consistent and sensible alternatives being offered and there is no determined opposition.

The reasons for the acquiescence on the Right are simple. Experience. Voters vote FOR politicians that like puppies or deer or "the environment". Voters vote AGAINST politicians who are "hard-hearted", "insensitive", and "cruel". These labels are quickly applied to any opponent of "more" government authority for Animal Welfare. Think about it. Senator "Claghorn" wants to require that all dog breeders (not "dogs", they come later) be registered, licensed, and inspected. He wants to form a new national government agency to carry this out. Who could be opposed to that? If any politician opposes it, he is quickly labeled as "insensitive" and an opponent of Animal Welfare. Newspapers, radio hosts, schoolteachers, University professors, and NGO's enthusiastically join his opponent in the next election to get rid of him. This has happened often in the USA in the past 35 years and it is happening as I write.

This political evolution has given us an issue today (the combination of Animal Welfare/animal rights & environmentalism) that is openly embraced by the Left and tacitly supported by the Right in Western Europe and the USA. This results in international demonstrations against "globalism" and "capitalism" and "racism" that are interspersed with signs and calls from demonstrators to "save" this or that animal and to "stop" farming or ranching or meat-eating or pet ownership or medical experiments or fur or circuses, etc. Tables of propaganda outside political meetings of the Right are every bit as extreme in these matters as are the publicly embraced propaganda passed out at political meetings of the Left.

I am reminded at this point of a chilling presentation I attended at an Animal Rights Conference in 2001 by a young woman who was employed by a national abortion-advocacy group. She was "on loan" to "The Great Ape Project". "The Great Ape Project" was several lawyers in Washington, DC that were preparing to go into Court at the first opportunity (utilizing animal rights' NGO funding) to test the legal theory that one of the primates could be considered a "citizen" or "man" as mentioned in the US Constitution and therefore entitled to all the rights of a human under the US Constitution. As with the expanded laws mentioned previously in this article, such a declaration (so far no such claim has been upheld in a court) could then be expanded incrementally to cover

other mammals in a sort of descending order of "intelligence" (whales, seals, dogs, cats, and on and on) or other such criterion. This nexus between Animal Welfare, animal rights, associated environmental and socialist programs and Human Life and Liberty leads us to the other major dimension of the Animal Welfare phenomenon: Morality.

IV. THE MORAL DIMENSION OF ANIMAL WELFARE.

Attention to and claims of Animal Welfare issues have exploded in the past 35 years in Western Europe and the USA as noted previously. This phenomenon has coincided with two other phenomena. First, church attendance whether measured as weekly attendance or as regular financial support has declined precipitously in these two areas of the world. Second, doctrinal dogmas and the beliefs they instill have undergone compromise, modification, and even elimination in many churches.

Doctrinal belief modifications that began earlier in the past century and then accelerated dramatically during the past 35 years include acceptance of all manner of birth prevention, divorce and remarriage, abortion, homosexuality, clergy promiscuity, same-sex "marriage", same-sex adoption, polygamy, euthanasia, pornography, gambling, children out of wedlock, artificial insemination, genetic "engineering", and "living together" to name but a few. Today British doctors recommend abortions for "club-foot"(an eminently correctable condition) and USA University professors openly propose making euthanasia of infants available for a period of time (6 months?) to parents of children that, for instance, have a cleft palate.

Only recently a USA professor at the University of Texas lectured that there are "too many" people and that he would welcome an Ebola virus that would "wipe out" over "half of mankind".

The purpose here is not to ignite a controversy over social matters but rather to point out painfully related and undeniable social phenomena that are clearly related to Animal Welfare matters in society today. As churches continue to de-emphasize core moral beliefs and as people increasingly have dissimilar or no inherent moral standards regarding what is right and wrong, we witness the spread of the philosophy that "there is no right and wrong" and that "whatever I believe is OK". Absent a firm acceptance of moral agreement, anything goes. GK Chesterton, the English philosopher of 100 years ago, observed that the point is not that such people believe "nothing" it is that they will believe "anything".

In addition to understanding the acceptance by a segment of the public of various Animal Welfare claims and their use as excuses for dramatic changes in society, the presence of shared as well as hidden agendas must be considered. Why is a pro-abortion organization funding an animal rights project? Is it merely coincidence that the growth in claimed "inherent animal rights" and the drive to enshrine such rights in law parallel the lowering of the value and legal protection of unborn, young, disabled, sick, elderly, unwanted, and "over-populated" human life? How have we arrived at the point where a puma can kill a child and we blame the parents and cry out to "protect" the puma? How can we force rural people to endure introduced or naturally occurring abundant and deadly animal populations from elephants and crocodiles to wolves and poisonous snakes and look away when human lives and families and economies are destroyed? By what right do we allow medical experiments important for saving human life to be eliminated because of "harm" to another's property? How can we "protect", under penalty of law, the eggs of certain wild birds while funding and encouraging the casual and widespread destruction of unborn humans?

Absent an underlying moral agreement, nothing is sacred. The Founding Fathers of the USA (George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, et al.) recognized the importance of this fact when they composed our Declaration of Independence (during our Revolutionary War against England) and afterwards when they drafted our Constitution and Bill of Rights. When nothing is sacred then anything is possible and things are only sacred in a society where there is moral agreement. Words alone form no shield to freedom. When we no longer agree that murder is wrong or that "men" are unique, then even though the Declaration of Independence says, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." it is still possible to say that killing humans is permitted and that "animals" are "men" and should be protected.

All it seems to take to attain these ends today is political power. In spite of "guaranteed rights" in our Constitution (freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, right to bear arms, State rights, etc.); we see new laws and court decisions and votes that erode these rights illegally for the first time in over 200 years in defiance of the Constitutional provisions. The US Constitution and its' guarantees were not meant to be vulnerable to "majority votes" or "activist" Supreme Court rulings by judges. That is until recent years when increasingly such things are allowed to justify political changes proposed by politicians and bureaucrats providing for their own self-interests at the expense of public rights and freedoms. The answer as to why, is that we are coming to believe "anything" and the Animal Welfare philosophy as a moral imperative is an important part of that change.

IV. DISCUSSION

Invariably everyone that discusses Animal Welfare is categorized as either "for" or "against" Animal Welfare. This is not only untrue, it is a tactic used by dictatorships and radicals down through the ages to marginalize and eliminate any dissidents or non-supporters. I refute such characterizations and I ask that you do too.

We are all different while being the same. This is both a strength and a weakness for societies. Guarding liberty to be free and to enable each of us to do our best with our lives should always be the primary role of government. In recent years, in the USA and Western Europe, Animal Welfare has become a very real factor in the decline of liberty and freedom. There is no other way to describe the Treaties, Laws, Conventions, Regulations, Bureaucracies, and Penalties that have proliferated based in whole or in part due to Animal Welfare claims when describing their impacts fairly and accurately.

The complexity of Animal Welfare issues threaded through the hidden agendas behind the scenes is often belied by the complexity encountered in the proposals themselves. Western European and USA animal rights and Animal Welfare factions (both government and private) have tried to eliminate both trapping and the fur trade. Except for the extreme radical groups attacking women wearing fur on the street or smashing windows of furriers, the campaign usually begins with claims of "cruelty" and the need for a "humane" trap that kills instantly. Fair enough, but what emerges from this concern for Animal Welfare? Some disturbing facts come to light that make the task very different than what was envisioned. "Instant kill" traps will kill pets rather than hold a paw or leg that may be amenable to treatment later and they are more dangerous for children. "Instant kill" traps are often unwieldy and impossible to fool certain species (like mink or marten) with. "Instant kill" traps are often dangerous for trappers to set when they are all alone in the cold and they are often too unwieldy to carry more than a few when "running" the trap line. When traps are set to drown animals (beaver, otters, mink) the time to death (like the time to death for executed criminals) is never short enough. In other words,

the concern for Animal Welfare is merely the emotional selling point for the unleashing of new governmental authority to make everyone else (trapper, furrier, fur user, and associated commerce) live as you desire, not as they wish to live.

Often a serious analysis of an Animal Welfare claim belies interlocking hidden agendas involving Animal Welfare, animal rights, and environmental schemes. Both nationally and internationally the organizations representing these campaigns meet together, work together, and share resources routinely. When I attended a United Nations environmental conference in Nairobi, the lobbyists I saw in the audience and in the banquets and working in the halls were many of the same lobbyists I encountered whispering to EU bureaucrats and politicians when I was working for the USA in Europe to defeat the attempted fur import ban to eliminate trapping and they were some of the same lobbyists I encountered at an Animal Rights Conference at a swank Washington, DC hotel several years later. Whether it is the organization to outlaw farming or medical experiments or pets or hunting or trapping or any of a dozen more traditional human pursuits, Animal Welfare claims often begin and periodically support (as opportune) the radical societal and governmental changes being sought.

Concern for animals and their use and treatment is a natural and very human emotion. To treat animals with care and respect is a credit to Human Ideals and our capacity for empathy and understanding, characteristics Not shared by other creatures. We should each be thankful for and manage wisely the plants and animals that have been provided to us both domestically and in the "wild". These are also laudable Human attributes that are NOT shared by any other creatures.

In order to extend our concern for Animal Welfare beyond our personal realm (whether or not we have pets or hunt or enjoy a circus or eat meat or wear fur) we must look to our moral and political beliefs. Morally there are several questions to ponder. Do we believe that man is a very special part of God's creation? Do we really believe that people should die so that animals might live? Do we believe that the avoidable loss of any human life to an animal is an acceptable "price to pay" for any environmental or animal construct? Do we believe that animals are for man's use? Do we think any animal has any "rights" similar to or equal to those we ascribe to man? If we believe animals have "rights", who "endowed" them with those rights? On what basis do we assert that animals are NOT property that may be owned? I suggest that how we answer these questions indicates whether or not we believe that our concern about Animal Welfare is something we practice and work to encourage others to practice or something we believe must be imposed on others no matter what it takes.

Politically, there are questions that enlarge upon our moral outlook regarding Animal Welfare. Do we believe that governments are formed to "establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility" "promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity" as stated in the US Constitution? If so, how do we justify destroying the property rights, freedom, liberties, culture, and traditions of "ourselves and our Posterity" for any reason? Do we believe that anything that does not affect "my style of living" (to quote a long-deceased Maine fur trapper) should be vulnerable to destruction if I object to it and can get enough political support? In other words, is nothing (animal ownership, uses of animals from hunting and pets to livestock and displays, experimental use of animals for medicine testing, etc.) guaranteed us and therefore to be PROTECTED by government or are all these things a "gift" or "grant" from government that can simply be withdrawn as circumstances dictate? Do I agree that ANY cause that can generate political support (think Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, Zimbabwe, or even ancient Rome) should be imposed on others at any cost? Do I look to my government for "Tranquility" or do I look on my government as corrupt and whatever disrupts it is good for

speeding up the day when it can be changed? Do I enjoy the diverse natures and pursuits of my neighbors or do I resent much of what those around me do? Do I believe that protecting my neighbor's rights protects my rights or do I believe that I should be able to impose my views on the rest "for their own good"? Do I really believe that animals have "rights" or do I view that claim as a necessary step to achieving other things? The answers to these questions will tell us much about Animal Welfare and where our personal boundaries are for the extent to which we will attack our neighbors' rights and freedoms over it.

I am NOT against Animal Welfare nor in my view should anyone be. Does that mean I would imprison cockfighters or farmers that raise calves for slaughter (for the record I have never attended a cockfight and I enjoy veal scaloppini)? I have hunted and enjoyed eating wild ducks and geese for over 50 years and, according to my wife, there is little in my life that has priority over that pastime for me.

Perhaps with all the foregoing in mind, the best way to conclude this examination of Animal Welfare is to ask and answer some specific questions to gauge where I come down on some of the more common areas of concern with Animal Welfare today. I do this simply to suggest how this complex matter can be handled to accommodate legitimate concern for Animal Welfare as opposed its use as a tool for radical societal and governmental change.

1. Q. Are you "against" the Endangered Species Act and the Animal Welfare Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the UN Treaties and Conventions you mention?

A. No. Truly endangered SPECIES (not subspecies and all the subsequent subdivisions) should be identified and remedies and funding sought for preservation through voluntary (on the part of governments and citizens) actions. Marine Mammals, like all other abundant species, benefit from monitoring and control to preserve them where and in what numbers are compatible with human activities as well as minimizing or eliminating their conflict with important human activities and interests. This goes for UN documents that should be based on leadership and obtaining funding for voluntary actions by nations primarily charged with the welfare of their citizens as opposed imposing someone else's idea of their role. Wherever possible, the management I suggest should be supported by reasonable user taxes (licenses, excise taxes, etc.) for sustainable uses and management of the resources.

2. Q. Do you support bio-medical experimentation.

A. Yes. That said, reasonable requirements by governments for standards that DO NOT unduly restrict the researchers from obtaining needed data for Human medicine are a good thing. The only problem is that such initial pledges soon attract activist participants that constantly use such authority to ELIMINATE bio-medical testing. Maintaining control of the designated government control to guard the rights of future people to benefit from effective and affordable medicine is THE problem.

3. Q. Should Universities teach Animal Welfare?

A. Certainly. However, like bio-medical experimentation (and "Endangered Species" and "Invasive [i.e. 'Non-Native'] Species" and "Native Ecosystems" and "Wilderness" "science") the research and emphases quickly shift to ideological and propaganda mills for Non-Government Organization (NGO) and bureaucratic hidden agendas that are antithetical to the original purpose. Since government (with NGO support and the politicians lust for votes) provides the majority of the money for the teaching and research at nearly all Universities, the original

laudable topic is soon subsumed into a flow of "information" and "findings" designed to pass new laws, justify new bureaucracies and more regulations, fund the future of each professors "specialty", while ignoring or explaining away, the loss of liberties that provide the fuel for the government growth and NGO power over that government.

4. Q. What about livestock production?

A. I agree wholeheartedly with the Founding Fathers of the USA that the welfare of animals raised for livestock should be a matter for State (not Federal) jurisdiction. Interstate and foreign commerce in livestock rightly falls under Federal jurisdiction. With exceptions for potential animal health challenges like BSE or anthrax or foot and mouth or brucellosis or various bird diseases, etc.) State standards should be as varied as the State wants. If a State is a large stock producer with no large cities (to house animal rights advocates) and it wishes to maintain minimal standards and have its' University support that, so be it. If a State is overshadowed by a large city (the city of Chicago and the State of Illinois would be an example of this) and wants stock to be kept on carpets and be massaged like Kobe beef and therefore be uncompetitive price-wise, again so be it. This applies to so many of these Animal Welfare concerns. Taking this to an even lower (and more desirable) level of control. If a heavily Hispanic County or a County has a long tradition of raising and fighting cocks and wants to have a cockfighting ring I believe that it should be possible for a State to permit such activity under reasonable rules it lays forth regarding nuisance matters and disposal of birds.

5. Q. What about circuses, rodeos, movie production, races, and competitions?

A. These should fall under the jurisdiction of State governments to allow or require certain practices. If one State wants to lure movie producers or another wants to provide races (this is really because the people of that State elect political representatives that support those things as do the voters that elect them) then so be it. Does anyone believe that any State will permit horses to be shot or dogs to be dismembered for a movie? Of course they wouldn't because the electorate would vote them out of office. If there is concern about the treatment of old racing greyhounds require that they be euthanized. We have become sentimental and emotional to a fault such that we reject more and more the need to kill certain animals (unclaimed stray dogs, marauding predators, over-abundant deer, stray cats, depredating birds, disease carrying animals like wolves, etc.) while accepting the need to kill a dog that attacks someone or a domestic bird flock if someone whispers "Asian bird flu". *This hierarchy of animal (worship?, concern?, intelligence?, cuteness?, attention?, etc.) is anthropomorphism run amok.* It is fostered and encouraged by the animal rights and Animal Welfare organizations whose agendas and goals have been discussed here. The biological and moral truism is that there is NO difference between the whale and the baby seal and crocodile and the cobra. They are all wild creatures that do some beneficial things and some harmful things and they should be managed (in distributions and numbers) thoughtfully by the lowest level of government (because the lowest level of government is most responsive to the control, needs and interest of the people). Likewise there is NO difference between puppies and calves and domestic turkeys and farmed fish. They are all bred, fed, housed, and maintained for the benefit of man. They are the property of an owner and governments' role should be one of protecting the interests of property owners and the property owners will in turn take care of THEIR property. Wild animals like wild plants are under the jurisdiction of both State and Federal governments that in reality HOLD THEM IN TRUST FOR ALL. Therefore government has a responsibility to maintain these wild resources for all people to use and enjoy in sustainable and self-financing (where possible) ways in line with the culture and traditions of the human society that creates the government.

6. Q. What about transport and slaughter?

A. Transport and slaughter regulation that protects human health and maintains animal health is a laudable and appropriate government task. But here again, the initial high-sounding purpose masks a pernicious agenda. When a Leftist Governor took over a strong dairy State recently, his animal rights supporters and appointees had him close down 11 of the 13 slaughterhouses in the State. Ostensibly for "environmental" reasons, the real reason was to cripple the use of aging dairy cows and beef cattle for human consumption and other products. Increased transportation costs to more remote locations have crippled dairy farmers and closed many down. In a similar vein, the notion that slaughterhouse control achieves other purposes has led to attempts for a national or federal law in the USA to ban entirely ANY slaughter of any horse for any purpose. Campaigns to close slaughterhouses have left only three in the USA that slaughter horses. Formerly thousands of horses a year were used in the USA for mink and dog food as well as exported to a thriving demand in Europe for human consumption. The Animal Welfare advocates cite slaughter's "cruelty" (more so than other slaughter?), the fact that horses are not "inspected" before Europeans eat them (as if they care) and that there are "other" animals for feeding other animals. In fact it is the old, original Animal Welfare coalition (in this case rich horse owners and radical socialist vegans) that are orchestrating this "save the horses" campaign under the flag of Animal Welfare with purchased political support. Only this morning (this is all too common in North American papers) I read a book review of "Chew on This", an anti-fast food book by Eric Schlosser meant to close McDonalds, Burger King, etc. According to the author, these establishments "both promote dangerous working conditions at slaughterhouses and promote cruelty to animals."

7. Q. What about zoos and wildlife refuges and parks?

A. First there are public and private zoos. Much of the fuss about animal conditions in certain public and private circumstances is generated by the public zoos and their supporters and employees wanting to close all other facilities. While the public zoo folks will work with animal facilities that have government support the overall administration of importation, export, and interstate commerce in animals should be a Federal or national responsibility to facilitate human safety and the well-being of the animal themselves. Facilities and standards otherwise should rest with State governments. People will avoid and complain about dirty or dangerous zoos and government will respond or fees will decline. Overpopulations of certain specimens or old individuals should not be treated as we used to treat older human relatives but should be euthanized unhesitatingly for both health and cost reasons. This means determined government action and refuting emotional nonsense from the media, teachers, and other advocates. Wildlife Refuges, Parks, and similar reservations are increasingly managed as some sort of nature cartoon movie. Outright lies about how wolves will "control" certain animals (mostly they will eliminate them) and how they "don't" kill dogs or pose a threat to children and older people are spread by the same bureaucrats and professors that work to eliminate hunting and trapping and fishing and logging and grazing (all renewable and sustainable uses of these natural resources) on the same public lands. Our National Park authorities have ignored vastly overabundant deer and elk herds that have denuded all the vegetation up to six feet off the ground in the Parks for decades. Recently, when the Federal government considered spending millions to "fight Invasive Species" the Park authorities concocted tale after tale of how "Invasive Species" (both plant and animal) were "denuding" the Parks. It was all lies to get the money. When it was "native" deer and elk doing it and there was no new money, they could care less. Today, they spend millions having government "sharpshooters" kill a few deer and elk that doesn't even match their reproduction rates while refusing to even consider hunters that PAY, hunt where and when told, and USE all of

the meat and parts and kill as many as you want, when you want. The lies and distortions about euthanizing and lethally controlling populations and species are greatly fostered and maintained by Animal Welfare claims and distortions like "cruelty" and "unnecessary" that first emerged to justify "rescue" leagues and "shelter" funding.

8. Q. What about cosmetic surgery for animals?

A. If the owner wants it and the veterinarian will perform it, what is the problem? I had Dobermans when I was growing up. Like boxers, who wants a hard-boned tail on an excited dog swishing around a child's head or by expensive antiques? Further if I want my Doberman's ears to be pointy, why is that anyone else's business? I respect a veterinarian that might object to such things but I would not use that vet after finding this out.

9. Q. What about "responsible" ownership in an urban environment?

A. Urban living always carries with it additional requirements over rural living. There are human health, animal disease, noise, and nuisance (smell, neighbor fears, etc.) considerations that should be the responsibility of urban governments to employ regulations that address those needs in line with the cultural traditions of each community. Additionally, recent years have seen an upsurge in instances of dogs attacking other dogs, children, old people, and family members. Whether this is due to breeding (drug protection or personal protection in dangerous communities) or to simply poor animal training and control by young and irresponsible owner is debatable. Nevertheless, communities should employ all alternatives from prohibitions of certain kinds of animals to restraints, licensing requirements, and euthanasia. Animals are like vehicles. They are owned by citizens and simply because they are licensed or inspected by government does not mean that these necessary government functions should be tools for those opposed to vehicles to have them all taken away.

10. Q. What about the destiny of unwanted animals?

A. The past 20 years in the USA have witnessed an explosion of "animal rescue" and "animal shelter" societies, clubs, organizations, and governmental extensions of these mostly urban phenomena. The one thing they all have in common and advocate is "sheltering" animals and NOT killing them. This "No-Kill" attitude has spread to the response to dangerous and harmful wild animals and endangered animals and a sliding ladder of "deserving" animals as exemplified by baby seals and whales and elephants, et al. Unwanted animals and lost animals whose owners are unknown are a large financial burden to communities as well as nuisances, carriers of disease, and a danger to humans. A modest timeframe to find a home or an owner should be made by government to return animals when a fine or payment can be made by the person that takes it. Private organizations should be encouraged but their facilities should be no more of a nuisance than any other pet ownership facility. Otherwise, problem animals roaming free and captured animals should be killed or euthanized swiftly. When this is done fairly and consistently, owners understand that they must contain their animals and mark their animals and pay for damage the animal causes which in turn creates "responsible ownership" and nuisance animal control in line with community resources and the good of the community.

11. Q. What about the bond between animals and man?

A. I am frequently accused of being "cruel" and hard-hearted" and "insensitive". For the record, when I recently had my retriever euthanized, I had tears in my eyes as I buried him. When I shot and buried a retriever pup because it had come down with distemper 50 years ago I likewise felt very bad. That said, should the "bond" between rich, young girls (many horse owners are such in the USA) and their horse be a reason for ALL

horse-owners to be prohibited from selling old or unwanted and unmarketable horses to a slaughterhouse? Should school children's letters to government to "save" all marine mammals based on pictures of baby seals be the basis for national policy? Should North American or European or for that matter South American residents be able to make their notions of African animals be the basis for UN impositions on African communities that cause deaths from crocodiles or elephants or leopards and destruction of crops by elephants and deaths to untold numbers of humans from malaria that could be avoided by the use of DDT? The answer is of course NO to all these things. Once mankind strived to form governments to protect them from others. Today, too often our task is to prevent government from being the tool of others who would extinguish our freedoms and way of life every bit as thoroughly as the barbarians and dictators of old.

12. Q. What about national and international associations for animal protection?

A. The operative word in this question is "protection". Look at the list of participants at an Animal Rights Conference and the number of groups is in the hundreds. All of them pivot around "protecting" or "saving" or "stopping" particular animals and animal use, management, and ownership. Twenty or thirty of these groups are large, international, and pay their executives upwards of half a million per year in salaries and perks. They lobby and heavily influence US, Western European, and UN politicians and bureaucrats. They make Billions off campaigns dependent on emotional pictures and half-baked claims and deceptions that an increasingly urban and uneducated (the youth are propagandized in the public schools and by the media) populace responds to. I worked a part-time job years ago in Washington and one Sunday there was a big animal rights rally by The White House. After the rally was over, for three hours I saw more homosexual couples wearing animal rights T-shirts from the rally than I would have ever imagined. The point being not that homosexuals support animal rights but think of all the disaffected urban groups today (single professional women, childless professional couples, homosexuals, retired widows and widowers, etc.) that have disposable incomes and are hungry for a "cause", *especially one that does not affect their style of living.*

Having made clear my contempt for animal "protection" organizations, let me say that the same perversion of purpose and emergence of hidden agendas has emerged in North American wildlife "conservation" organizations in recent years. The twenty or thirty richest and largest "conservation" organizations have embraced this "New Age" thinking as they quietly abandon the advocacy for natural resource management and hunting and fishing in favor of an amorphous role of establishing "Native Ecosystems", combating Invasive Species, keeping plants and animals in claimed historic distributions and other immeasurable, expensive, non-valuable (to man) pursuits. In the USA, such shifts transfer funding from user-pays licensing and permits to taxpayer support that is both steady and many times more lucrative to government agencies while growing tax bills and government power. It is even turning State wildlife agencies away from the interests of the State for which they work into servants of Federal masters that increasingly give them the Federal moneys and grants on which they have come to depend.

Animal Welfare is a "Trojan Horse" just like Invasive Species. In the USA there is a campaign to give the Federal government all authority (beyond its current jurisdiction to regulate import, export, and interstate commerce) over Invasive Species and all the human activities associated with it. The reasons given are hyperbole about killer bees, purple loosestrife, kudzu, brown tree snakes, etc. causing widespread havoc. If the new Federal authority becomes a reality the anti-hunting and anti-ranching and anti-farming and anti-fishing groups hidden behind the campaign will sue and insert employees into the enforcing government agencies. Instead of the species mentioned above, pheasants (from China) and chukar partridge (from India) and brown trout and

rainbow trout (from Europe) and pasture grasses from Asia and farm plants from all around the world will come under the government purview and be regulated and eliminated to drive out the hunters, fishermen, ranchers, and farmers to name but a few.

Similarly Animal Welfare concerns about medical experiments or animal slaughter are "Trojan Horses" for the same reasons to control and eliminate other rural groups and animal users and owners. Had I proclaimed when the Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed in 1976 based largely on pictures of baby seals on the ice and porpoises in tuna nets that it would lead to unchecked marine mammal populations decimating ocean fisheries, that 30 years later no management or "taking" of any marine mammal would be allowed, and that a Federal judge would even prohibit research on sea lions because it may be "cruel"; why you would have laughed me right out the door and I would have been called "crazy". However, that is precisely where we are and where we are proceeding.

Veterinarians have a large and challenging role to play in the future protection of freedom and liberties in your communities. Many veterinarians in the USA are enthusiastic animal rights advocates. Certainly, like the wildlife biology community such enthusiasts are attracted to the work "with" and "for" animals. The societal confrontations I have described are reflected within the veterinary community every bit as much as they are present within our urban and rural politics and morality. The same volatile mixes (wildlife biologists, veterinarians, young girl horse owners, rural estate owners, urban professionals, hunters, dog breeders, vegans, urban cat owners, anarchists, animal trainers, professors searching for fame and grants, bureaucrats searching for "more" pay and retirement and power, politicians searching for votes, etc.) and the same political divide underpin what we say and do and what the future of Animal Welfare will be.

Each of us must answer the question, "will animals continue to be worshipped while human life continues to be cheapened?" Each of us alone can examine our moral compass and our political beliefs as we answer this question.

There is a very real connection between the rise of animal sanctity and the decline in respect for and protection of human life. These phenomena not only parallel each other in time but also in the parts of the political spectrum that support them. Animal Welfare items in new laws and regulations and in court rulings are the fertilizer for agendas far beyond what appears to the casual observer just as concern for "equal rights" has resulted in the imposition of all manner of socially destabilizing sexual practices and concern for victims of "back street abortions" has led to the death of millions and the call for more and more latitude to take human life.

I ask each of you to join me in considering carefully what public calls for Animal Welfare represent and what they lead to. I am firmly convinced that matters concerned with Animal Welfare are best handled by voluntary agreement, minimal government intrusion, and open discussion. While it is not always possible to avoid conflicts, it should always be possible for men of good will to care for one another's liberties, freedom, culture, and traditions. To betray or simply fail to defend these rights of our brothers and sisters leads inevitably to eventual loss of our own liberties, freedom, culture, and traditions.

Jim Beers
6 June 2006

- If you found this worthwhile, please share it with others. Thanks.

- This article and other recent articles by Jim Beers can be found at <http://jimbeers.blogster.com> (Jim Beers Common Sense)

- Jim Beers is available for consulting or to speak. Contact: jimbeers7@verizon.net

- Jim Beers is a retired US Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife Biologist, Special Agent, Refuge Manager, Wetlands Biologist, and Congressional Fellow. He was stationed in North Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York City, and Washington DC. He also served as a US Navy Line Officer in the western Pacific and on Adak, Alaska in the Aleutian Islands. He has worked for the Utah Fish & Game, Minneapolis Police Department, and as a Security Supervisor in Washington, DC. He testified three times before Congress; twice regarding the theft by the US Fish & Wildlife Service of \$45 to 60 Million from State fish and wildlife funds and once in opposition to expanding Federal Invasive Species authority. He resides in Centreville, Virginia with his wife of many decades.