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### From the Director's Desk

There is a fundamental disagreement in society over the value of wild animals and the goal of wildlife management. Although this clash of values is rarely discussed directly, it plays out in countless wildlife policy issues. And it begs the question: what is wildlife conservation?

Traditionally, wildlife managers have viewed wild animals as simply a resource for human use, i.e. consumption. This attitude still prevails today in state wildlife management and is at the heart of many controversial policies, such as fur trapping, predator control to increase game populations, wildlife killing contests, etc. But that view is increasingly unacceptable to a public that values wild animals for their intrinsic and ecological values, apart from any benefits they might have for people.

The view of wild animals as resources underlies the traditional definition of "conservation," which is often contrasted with "preservation" which, as the narrative goes, frowns on human use of nature. In reality, the lines between the two concepts are blurred. Most [definitions](#) of conservation today focus on the long-term recovery and maintenance of thriving wildlife and healthy natural systems, while acknowledging that humans benefit from such efforts in myriad ways.

Defenders of the status quo in wildlife management, however--namely wildlife managers and their allied hunting and gun groups--continue to fight the battles of the past and insist that they are the true "conservationists" while dismissing the views of "preservationists" like Wildlife for All who seek change in wildlife governance so that states can do a better job of protecting biodiversity. The most extreme version of this position is the patently absurd and intentionally divisive statement that "[hunting is conservation](#)" as claimed by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

It is unfortunate that the term "conservation" has been co-opted like this. Whatever it's called, we all benefit from saving life on Earth.

For the protection and care of all,

Kevin Bixby



### Wildlife for All brings reform message to prestigious science conference

Wildlife for All staff and coalition partners came together in Reno, Nevada at the end of July to present a panel discussion entitled, "Modernizing State Wildlife Management to Restore Wildlife Resiliency" at the biennial North American Congress for Conservation Biology. [Read more HERE](#)

### Did You Know...

...federal tax dollars are used to recruit more hunters, anglers, and recreational shooters? These so-called "R3" efforts ("recruit, retain and reactivate") typically target youth, women and people of color. Most state wildlife agencies have an R3 program. To name just a few of many examples of R3 projects:

"Ladies Night Out" webinars on how to hunt coyotes (NM)  
 "Hook a Kid on Fishing" license giveaways to kids (AZ)  
 "Archery in the Schools" to encourage kids to take up bowhunting (nationwide)

State wildlife agencies have long used federal funds for R3 efforts to recruit more hunters and anglers, but legislation passed in 2019 now makes R3 federal grants available to states and nonprofits to recruit target shooters as well. One organization that has been quick to avail itself of these federal grants is the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which bills itself as the "Trade Association of the Firearms Industry." NSSF received five grants totalling nearly \$900,000 in 2020-2021.

Really? At a time when gun violence is at a record high in the U.S., should the federal government be subsidizing efforts by the gun industry to encourage more people to buy guns and take up shooting? [Read this op-ed](#) by Wildlife for All Executive Director, Kevin Bixby about the growing involvement of the gun lobby in wildlife matters.

### Our Coalition: Project Coyote

Wildlife for All is the organizing body for a nationwide coalition of organizations working together to reform state wildlife management to be more ecologically-focused, democratic and compassionate.

This month's featured coalition partner is [Project Coyote](#), a national non-profit organization whose mission is to promote compassionate conservation and coexistence between people and wildlife through education, science and advocacy. We thank them for the work they do and for being a part of our coalition!



[Find Out More About Our Coalition Partners](#)



### We need your support

Wildlife for All is able to do its important work to protect wildlife and create a more democratic, compassionate wildlife management system through the generosity of our members.

Please consider a monthly or annual gift today!

If you have comments, questions or suggestions for our newsletter email: [robyn@wildlifeforall.us](mailto:robyn@wildlifeforall.us)

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SWEC dba Wildlife for All is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, federal EIN 85-0403860.



*Not a member? Please join us! We work to transform state wildlife management to respect the intrinsic value of all species, reform wildlife commissions to be more democratic and inclusive, and replace outdated laws and policies with new ones based on modern science. We've had 30 years of success and we cannot do it without our members. So please join us today by making a secure online donation! Call 575-522-5552 or contact [info@wildlifeforall.us](mailto:info@wildlifeforall.us) for more info.*

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