



**HOW RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE USING
"SPORTSMEN'S" GROUPS AS CAMOUFLAGE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A slew of activist organizations—some old, some new—are trying to influence the public and policymakers by appearing as “sportsmen” groups when discussing land use, energy, and other policies. Far from groups representing mainstream hunters, anglers, and other sportsmen, however, these groups serve as camouflage for radical environmental interests. The proof is in the funding.

THE CAMOUFLAGE

IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

Founded in 1922 by 54 anglers and named after a 17th Century author, the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) postures as a pro-gun, pro-sportsman organization. But one look at its major funders reveals a “Who’s Who” list of radical, left-wing, environmentalist foundations.

Since the late 90s, IWLA has received over \$13 million in foundation funding. Much of this has come from radical environmentalist groups to fund anti-coal campaigns.

The Chicago-based, anti-gun Joyce Foundation — Barack Obama served on the board from 1994-2002 — has given IWLA \$3.2 million to conduct a variety of campaigns, such as attacking coal power plants in the Midwest, promoting alternative “clean” energy, and pushing for a trading system of renewable energy credits. IWLA has received \$4.1 million from San Francisco-based The Energy Foundation for a variety of anti-coal, pro-wind energy campaigns in the Midwest.

The Minnesota-based Bush Foundation (unrelated to either former President) gave \$525,000 to IWLA between 2003 and 2009 for clean-air and wind-power campaigns in the Midwest. The environmentalist heavyweight Turner Foundation has given \$520,000 to IWLA. The David

and Lucile Packard Foundation gave \$712,000 to IWLA between 2001 and 2007 for, among other things, human population control issues. Bizarrely for a group founded by anglers, IWLA advocates “increased access to reproductive health care” on its website. IWLA is a member, alongside the Sierra Club, of the “Population-Environment Coalition,” a group that believes “addressing human population growth... is fundamental to protecting and restoring natural resources, slowing global warming and protecting habitat.”

TROUT UNLIMITED

Trout Unlimited (TU) was founded in the 1950s as an association of fly fishermen committed to preserving America’s trout streams and replenishing the trout population for fishing. In recent years, however, TU seems to have hooked a great source of income: the radical environmentalist movement, launching tangential campaigns against energy production and opposing the Keystone XL natural gas pipeline.

Trout Unlimited’s financial supporters have helped drive a more aggressive environmentalist stance that includes opposition to hydraulic fracturing for natural gas in the

Marcellus Shale deposits and support for carbon taxation through a “cap-and-trade” program. The organization receives millions of dollars per year from environmentalist foundations, many based near San Francisco. In the past 6 years, TU and its affiliates have received sizable funds from the following environmentalist foundations:

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation:
\$17,065,000

The Gordon E. and Betty I. Moore Foundation:
\$4,671,810

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation:
\$5,124,526

The Wyss Foundation:
\$2,163,600

The Pew Charitable Trusts:
\$750,000

While Trout Unlimited began as a conservationist organization and presents itself as such, changes in leadership and foundation funding have seen it move towards the anti-business environmentalist position. TU makes efforts to stall and block development of America’s mineral resources, running a well-funded campaign against mining in Alaska and pushing over burdensome regulation of natural gas extraction in Pennsylvania. TU also endorsed the highly controversial “cap-and-trade” proposal before Congress.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership bills its mission as “guaranteeing you a place to hunt and fish.” Described in the press as “Republican-leaning,” in reality TRCP seems to be little more than a camouflaged advocacy front for an alliance of environmental and left-wing interests. In 2014, 84% of TRCP’s contributions came from foundations.

TRCP is a spin-off of a Trout Unlimited project. In 2000, Trout Unlimited became a “fiscal sponsor” of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Alliance, which was a partnership of six groups including the Izaak Walton League of America and Trout Unlimited, two “green decoy” organizations. The left-wing Pew Charitable Trusts created TRCA, and Pew sent over \$2 million to Trout Unlimited earmarked for the Alliance. TRCA later applied for its own tax-exempt status under the name Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Project and became the separate organization that it is now.

Much about TRCP’s liberal roots remains the same today. TRCP’s partners include labor union groups such as the AFL-CIO, environmentalists, and other poseur-sportsmen groups like Trout Unlimited, the Izaak Walton League of America, and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers. TRCP helps lead an alliance called “Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development” with Trout Unlimited and the National Wildlife Federation.

Far from a group relying on grassroots funding, TRCP relies on a handful of sugar daddies for financial backing. In 2011, TRCP received \$2.3 million in grants from foundations—or nearly two-thirds of its income. In 2012, 75% of TRCP donations came from a mere 8 donors. In 2013, this figure was 77%.

Major funders include the Turner Foundation (\$2.3 million), the David and Lucile Packard Foundation (\$835,000), the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (\$1.11 million), Pew Charitable Trusts (\$1.55 million), and the Hewlett Foundation (\$3.6 million). Other funders include the Joyce Foundation, McIntosh Foundation, the Thomas and Stacy Siebel Foundation, and the Knobloch Family Foundation.

There’s little doubt that the foundations veer strongly to the left, such as the Hewlett Foundation (gives millions to abortion provider Planned Parenthood), Joyce Foundation (gives millions to the anti-gun Violence Policy Center), and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation (gives millions to the pro-abortion NARAL).

TRCP is also behind the formation of the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance. A joint effort with 20 labor unions, the

Union Sportsmen's Alliance's goal is "to lure the political allegiance of gun-owning union members away from the NRA and its political agenda," according to The Washington Post—and presumably toward that of liberal-backing labor groups. The Union Sportsmen's Alliance claims to be in favor of the Second Amendment, yet TRCP has received \$150,000 from the anti-gun Joyce Foundation.

Shill for Big Labor

While the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership pretends its top priority is to promote the interests of sportsmen, the reality is that TRCP is funded by Big Labor for Big Labor. The well-documented connection between labor unions and TRCP makes it clear that this organization is merely another form of muscle for labor union bosses to do their bidding.

Since 2004, TRCP has been allied with the member unions of the AFL-CIO. The organizations became partnered after Edward Sullivan, then-President of the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades Department, joined the TRCP board. In 2005, labor union cash began to flow into TRCP's coffers. In the following years, AFL-CIO boss Richard Trumka, who heads the largest union federation in the country, received a seat on TRCP's board. AFL-CIO lobbyist Thomas Trotter also sits on TRCP's Policy Council. As a lobbyist, Trotter has lobbied on issues including "climate change legislation" and the 2009 "stimulus package."

In total, labor unions have provided \$5.1 million to TRCP since 2004, according to union disclosures to the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally the Union Sportsmen's Alliance, a partnership between labor unions and TRCP, has received over \$6 million from labor unions. Whit Fosburgh, the president of TRCP, even sits on Union Sportsmen's Alliance's board of directors. He is the only person on the 13-member board of the Union Sportsmen's Alliance who is not a national union official, according to the organization's website.

Based on the numerous connections in personnel as well as financially, it is obvious that TRCP has a concealed agenda—to do the bidding of Big Labor.

BULL MOOSE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

Bull Moose claims to be about "heritage, traditions and opportunities of sportsmen and women." Viewing its funding and leadership together, however, it's clear that it's merely the latest cog in a vast and wealthy environmentalist machine.

Bull Moose's largest donor is the Western Conservation Foundation, which has contributed \$154,908 since 2010 alone. WCF has deep connections with the environmental movement, including the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Audubon Society, Earthjustice (the self-proclaimed "law firm of the environment"), and Climate Solutions, a major proponent of "global warming." It has also contributed large sums to the Tides Center, funder of all things leftist.

Both of Bull Moose's co-founders and current co-directors, Gaspar Perricone and Tim Mauck, have connections to Trout Unlimited, another Astroturf sportsmen's organization. Another top executive, John Gale, previously directed conservation programs for TU. He now works for the National Wildlife Federation, a radical environmental activist organization.

In addition to spending on certain advocacy initiatives, Bull Moose is also affiliated with the Bull Moose Sportsmen's Alliance Action Fund, which makes political contributions. In 2010, the fund spent a total of \$117,540 to elect Michael Bennet (D-Colorado) to the U.S. Senate, and in 2012 contributed \$17,000 in support of Martin Heinrich (D-New Mexico). Bull Moose has not contributed any money to Republican candidates.

BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS AND ANGLERS

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) represents itself as good-old-boy outdoorsmen who simply want to hunt and fish and be left alone. But don't be fooled. As evidenced by both its sources of funding and current leadership, BHA is nothing more than one of the latest activist organizations pushing a radical environmentalist agenda.

The largest donor is the Western Conservation Foundation, which gave \$406,491 to BHA from 2011 to 2013

alone. WCF has given handsomely over the years to notorious environmentalists.

The next largest donor to BHA is the Wilburforce Foundation. From 2009 to 2014, Wilburforce gave a total of \$165,000 to BHA for a variety of purposes. As with the Western Conservation Foundation, Wilburforce gives heavily to other radical environmentalists, including the Environmental Law Institute, the Sierra Foundation, and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Dark Money in Montana

Backcountry Hunters also attempts to camouflage its agenda in the political realm. BHA Executive Director Land Tawney is deeply involved in Democratic Party politics. He was a leader of the Montana Sportsmen for Obama Committee and headed the “Montana Hunters and Anglers Leadership Fund” political action committee (PAC). The PAC spent \$1.1 million to oppose Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in Montana Denny Rehberg and \$500,000 on a Libertarian Party candidate whom observers believe took votes from Rehberg, helping secure Democrat Jon Tester’s re-election.

The incident received significant media attention after it was reported that the Libertarian candidate was the beneficiary of a mass mailing that did not contain a disclaimer as to who it was from. The cost of the mailing was estimated to be in the six-figures.

The *Billings Gazette* reported that the mailing came from the Montana Hunters and Anglers Leadership Fund, which had received a massive \$410,000 donation from the “League of Conservation Voters.” The League of Conservation Voters’ treasurer, Joe Splinter, had ties to a

well-known Democrat strategist. Additionally, Montana Hunters & Anglers Leadership Fund received \$140,000 from a mysterious organization called the “Citizens for Strength & Security Fund.” A PBS Frontline special revealed that this group’s listed address was a UPS store in Washington, D.C.

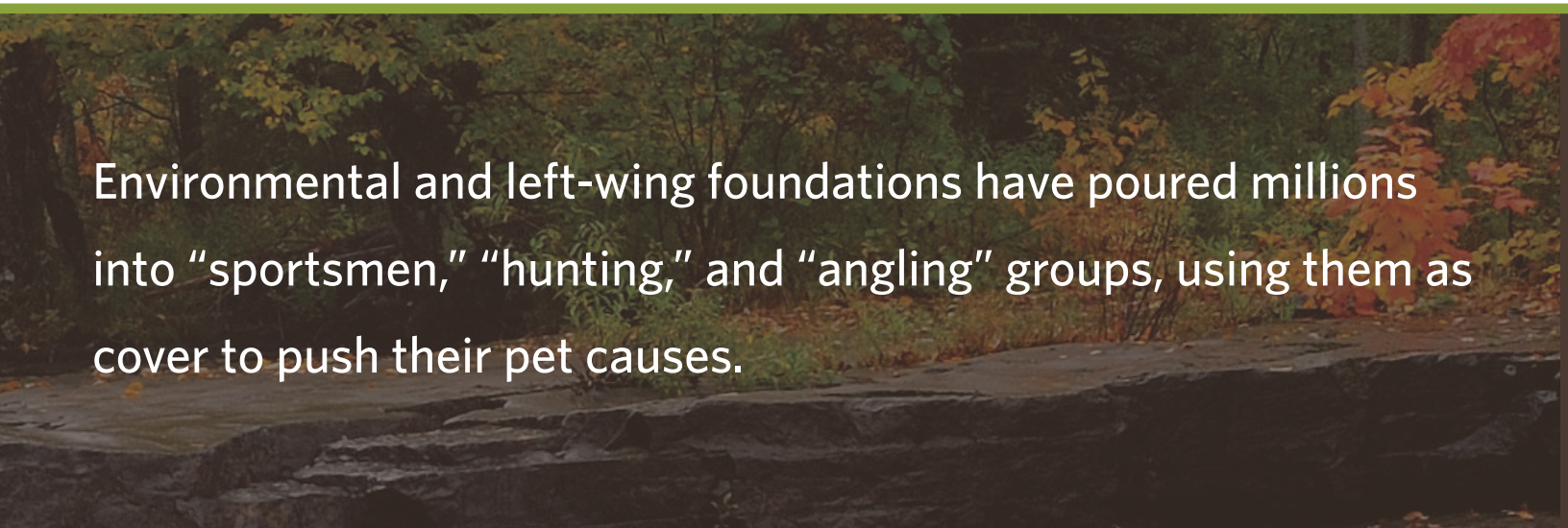
The underhanded mailing, which had been funded by dark money, resulted in the Montana GOP filing an FEC complaint against Tawney’s Montana Hunters and Anglers Leadership Fund. The Montana GOP accused the Montana Hunters & Anglers Pac of illegal spending practices and called on Land Tawney to “acknowledge and own up” to “secretive and deceptive tactics.” The Montana GOP alleged that the “out-of-state environmental extremists” had siphoned votes from Denny Rehberg by propping up the Libertarian candidate.

THE FUNDERS

WESTERN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

The Western Conservation Foundation’s website may lead with images of hunters and outdoorsmen, but the organization serves as a funding front for left-wing, liberal and Democratic Party-linked organizations in the states of Colorado, New Mexico, and California. Awarding money by invitation only, the invite has been extended not only to “green decoy” groups, but progressive activists.

WCF itself is heavily funded by left-wing environmentalist foundations. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (see below) has granted over \$12.4 million to WCF, and the Wyss Foundation has given WCF an additional \$3



Environmental and left-wing foundations have poured millions into “sportsmen,” “hunting,” and “angling” groups, using them as cover to push their pet causes.

million. Other funders include the David and Lucille Packard Foundation (below), Tides Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, the Denver Foundation, Trout Unlimited National Headquarters, and the Ettinger Foundation.

DAVID AND LUCILE PACKARD FOUNDATION

Created in 1964 by David Packard, co-founder of Hewlett-Packard, and his wife, the Packard Foundation boasts \$6 billion in assets. Recipients of Packard money include the left-wing “laundries” Tides Center and Tides Foundation; pro-abortion groups like NARAL; liberal-leaning groups like the Feminist Majority Foundation and National Council of La Raza; and radical environmental groups like the Waterkeeper Alliance and Environmental Working Group.

WILLIAM & FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION

Created by a co-founder of Hewlett-Packard and possessing \$7 billion in assets, the San Francisco Bay Area-based Hewlett Foundation funds a wealth of similar groups to Packard Foundation grantees. The groups range from pro-abortion and population-control groups (NARAL, Planned Parenthood, Zero Population Growth/Population Connection) to general left-wing groups

(ACORN, Brookings Institution, Tides Center and Tides Foundation) to radical environmentalists.

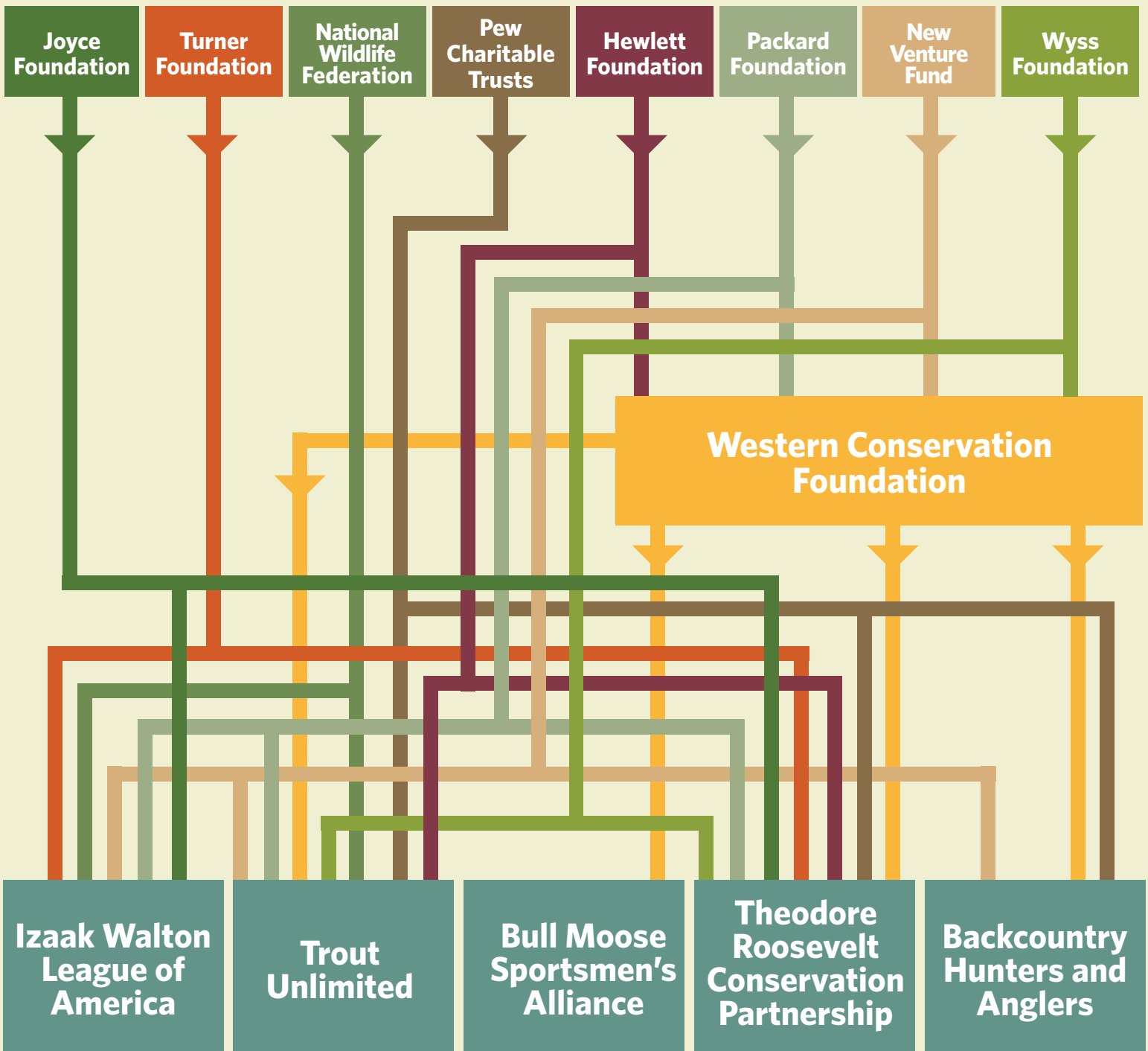
NEW VENTURE FUND

The New Venture Fund could be described as an East Coast version of the Tides Foundation and Tides Center. NVF offers itself as an “incubator” for small projects. Founded in 2007, NVF already raised more than \$35 million in 2011—an astronomical increase from the \$16 million it raised the previous year. NVF, which raises money from the Hewlett, Packard, Wyss, and Tides Foundations, gives money to Earthjustice (founded as the legal arm of the Sierra Club), Tides Center, Western Conservation Foundation, and to support anti-energy-development activists in the West. NVF shares an office with the Sixteen Thirty Fund, a 501(c)(4) group that promotes progressive policies.

THEIR MONEY IS ALWAYS GREEN



LEFT-WING FUNDERS



GREEN DECOYS



[GREENDECOYS.COM](https://greendecoys.com)