The Maze

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inflating deer, waterfowl and other game animal populations to supply hunters with living targets.

On paper, the Fish & Wildlife Service has lofty goals, but it often yields to the political pressures of the gun and hunting lobbies and does not live up to its mission of preservation.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM operates within the Department of the Interior, and is responsible for stewardship over our public lands in the West, which includes 272 million acres of land. It manages forestry, wilderness, and livestock grazing and resources for multiple use, including recreation, timber, and mineral leasing. It monitors grazing permits, rights on public lands and has jurisdiction over most wild horses and burros. Unfortunately, to the detriment of wildlife, the BLM is controlled by cattlemen with a strong lobby to protect their interests.

Under BLM management policies, both wild animals and the environment suffer. Cattle strip the rangeland of its forage and compete with other animals such as elk and bighorn sheep for food. Overgrazing as well as the constant trampling of the soil by cattle hoofs cause soil erosion and devastate native flora and fauna. Other activities such as mining and increased road building into wilderness areas for logging all contribute to air, water and soil pollution. Cumulatively, these activities cause severe disturbance to wildlife.

Given the agency's misguided management ideology, we are concerned about the future of American rangelands. Things have gotten better under the current administration, but there is still a lot of room for improvement. We need strong leadership, grazing reform, and new policies that reflect a sounder approach to public lands management.

Not Making the Grade

After examining these agencies, a distinct pattern emerges. While entrusted with safeguarding animals, most of the agencies, in practice, act as if they are at war with animals and wildlife. Although there are some very dedicated people working within these agencies, the decisions that are made usually reflect pressures by the industries they are supposed to regulate. ALDF has been in and out of court with all of them, and no doubt will continue to do so. As the animals' legal advocate, we will bring all of our legal clout to assure that federal regulatory agencies do a better job protecting animals.

Dissection Hotline Finds New Sponsor

THE DISSECTION HOTLINE has been an integral part of the ALDF family since 1989. It provides advice and counseling to students who refuse to dissect animals as part of their science education. The Hotline has helped thousands of students find alternative methods of study, and prompted three states, California, Florida and Pennsylvania to adopt state laws which protects a student's right not to harm animals.

As of March 1994, the program will be sponsored by the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS). The decision to transfer the Hotline to NAVS was not easy. When the program began, ALDF hoped to provide legal support to students who refuse dissection, but over the years we realized that the real need was for a greater emphasis on education. Since ALDF's primary focus is on litigation, we felt the Hotline's goals would be better served elsewhere. NAVS has graciously taken on sponsorship, and the Hotline will be able to continue its critically important function. In the event a student needs legal representation, ALDF will be happy to work with NAVS.

In summing up the first five years of operation, Hotline Director Pat Graham stated, "Although much headway has been made in establishing the student's right to choose and encouraging the use of alternatives, much remains to be done. We simply must persist in our efforts, and slowly but surely the changes we seek will come about. On every front these changes are apparent. Teachers are choosing alternatives; parents and activists are seeking to change policies, and students at every grade level are standing up for compassion and respect for animals. The Dissection Hotline is affecting the way science education is taught. There are still problems to be addressed, and we need to expand our efforts. However, this is an issue we can win — for the students and for the animals."

We are grateful for Pat's wonderful work and to those of you who supported the project. We bid the Hotline a fond farewell and wish it great success.

If you need help saying "no" to dissection, call the Dissection Hotline at (800) 922-FROG (3764). You can also request free informational booklets for elementary, high school, college students and educators.

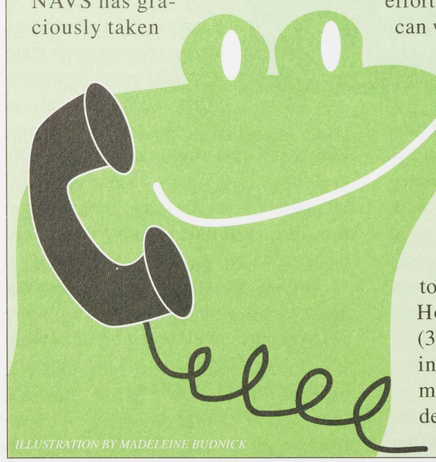

ILLUSTRATION BY MADELEINE BUDNICK

POINT OF LAW

Estate Planning for Animals

BY STEVE ANN CHAMBERS

PHOTO BY STEPHEN FARLEY

COMPANION ANIMALS add so much to our lives and give us joy, unconditional love and loyalty. Yet people routinely fail to provide for their animals in their wills.

You should not assume that the executor of your will knows what is in the best interest of your companion animals. You need to make direct reference and provisions for them in your will.

Here are several ways to ensure proper care of your animals following your death:

➤ Set up a Testamentary Guardian Trust within your will. Such a trust generally leaves an animal to a Guardian and sets aside a sum of money to be held and used by a Trustee to provide for the animal's food, care and veterinary needs over his lifetime. (The Guardian and Trustee can be the same person only if you absolutely trust that person). Leave a reasonable amount of money in the trust; if you leave a very large sum, relatives are more likely to challenge the will. The funds in this Trust will not actually belong to your animals, but they receive the benefit of the funds. Some other person or organization must be entitled to the residuary funds that may or may not be left after the deaths of your animals.

➤ Make a direct bequest to an individual (beneficiary) who agrees to use the funds to care for your animals. Clearly explain your expectations for the care of the animals. This is risky because the beneficiary is under no legal obligation to actually use the money for the care of your animals.

➤ If you cannot find an individual you trust to take your animals, locate a reputable shelter or humane organization in your area that will find a family to adopt your animals.

➤ You can state in your will that your companion animals may not be used for medical research or product testing under any circumstances.

➤ If you have provided in your will for the euthanasia of your animal upon your death, be aware that the courts have invalidated such provisions. You would be better advised to request your executor, a trusted friend, or a reputable humane organization be first given the opportunity to locate an appropriate home for your animals. There is less likelihood a court would overturn such a provision, and your animal may adapt much better than you would expect.

Make sure you discuss your plans in advance with the people or organizations you leave in charge so they won't be surprised and there will be less confusion and delay for your animals. Have your will and any trusts drafted by a qualified estate planning attorney in your area to avoid legal problems.

And finally, do not forget that you can make a significant contribution to the lives of thousands of animals by remembering the Animal Legal Defense Fund in your will. By doing so, you can avoid or lower federal estate taxes, and give a much needed boost to an effort that will continue your fight for the animals - beyond your lifetime.

Steve Ann Chambers is Vice President of the Animal Legal Defense Fund. She lives and practices law in Seattle, Washington.