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## Joint Position Statement on 'Project Wild'

The American Humane Association

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Animal Protection Institute

Fund for Animals

The Humane Society of the United States

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Authors**

The American Humane Association, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Animal Protection Institute, Fund for Animals, The Humane Society of the United States, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

# JOINT POSITION STATEMENT ON 'PROJECT WILD'

approved by

The American Humane Association  
The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals  
Animal Protection Institute  
Fund For Animals  
The Humane Society of the United States  
International Fund for Animal Welfare  
Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

November 2, 1984

Although many of the activities contained in the Project WILD teaching guides are designed to create an understanding of and appreciation for wildlife, the materials' explicit acceptance of animals as resources for human use and the acceptance and support of sport hunting and commercial or recreational trapping as necessary or desirable tools for controlling or manipulating animal populations represent strong biases which permeate much of the document and destroy its credibility as objective educational material. These biases are evidenced throughout the materials by the:

1. portrayal of wildlife as a resource for consumptive use by humans and a corresponding failure to discuss the desirability, as a matter of ethics, of providing responsible stewardship for, and limiting human-caused suffering to, wild animals to the maximum extent possible;

2. failure to address recreation and sport as the primary motivation for hunting in North America; providing instead the totally inaccurate implications that all hunting is done for necessary management or cultural/subsistence purposes, i.e., for the good of the animals or needy people;

3. failure to provide balanced discussion of the ethical concerns of those opposed to the killing of animals for sport or recreational purposes, implying instead that the only ethical questions associated

with sport hunting involve whether one should obey kill limits and other hunting regulations;

4. oversimplification and misrepresentation of relationships between animals and their habitats to suggest that animals, if not "harvested" by humans, will overpopulate, destroy their habitats, and starve; and a corresponding failure to explain the dynamics of animal populations in relation to the continued health and viability of biotic communities;

5. lack of representation for animal-welfare groups in listings of possible resource agencies and for animal-welfare concerns in background for debates, suggested dilemmas, sample stories, and other activities supposedly designed to foster critical thinking on controversial issues.

Because of the strong biases reflected in the Project WILD materials and the lack of balancing which should be provided by alternate viewpoints and representative data, we oppose the use of public funds for the future purchase, distribution, and/or promotion and use of Project WILD materials without the addition of substantial acceptable balancing material. In those States and Provinces where the materials have already been purchased and distributed, we believe the States and Provinces accepting this material should promptly distribute acceptable balancing material and have it used by those teachers who are using the Project WILD guides. We also believe that animal-welfare organizations must be included on State and Provincial steering committees and as resource people at workshops designed to introduce the materials to teachers. In the unfortunate event that a State or Province refuses to use necessary balancing material, we believe that the Project WILD material should not be used in the interests of the integrity of the educational process.

Finally, we wish to reiterate that we do not oppose the use of balanced objective materials which would, by definition, provide fair, accurate treatment of contrasting points of view.