Defenders Of Wildlife Essay, Research Paper

Mission Statement from Defenders of Wildlife:

Defenders of Wildlife (nickname: Defenders) is dedicated to the protection of all-native wild animals and plants in their natural communities. We focus our programs on what scientists consider two of the most serious environmental threats to the planet: the accelerating rate of extinction of species and the associated loss of biological diversity, and habitat alteration and destruction. Defenders works through education, advocacy, economic tools, litigation, legislation and negotiation to solve difficult wildlife conservation problems. In each program area, an interdisciplinary team of scientists, wildlife specialists, educators, activists, and attorneys works to promote multi-faceted wildlife problems.

The Issue(s):

Due to the today’s industrial economies and swelling human populations, mass extinction has prevailed. One might hope that increasing scarcity of unspoiled wild places would prompt intensified efforts to save the natural world. It hasn t. Fortunately, there are organizations like Defenders of Wildlife, who dedicate time, capital and effort to preserving and restoring what man has destroyed. Long known for their leadership on endangered species issues Defenders of Wildlife advocates for new approaches and implementation methods to preserving wildlife. Their programs encourage protection of entire ecosystems and interconnected habitats while protecting predators that serve as indicator species for ecosystem health (Defenders of Wildlife). While their focus area is wildlife conservation, they also deal with other issues such as protection of endangered species and predator resistance. Currently their largest wildlife conservation projects are geared towards recovering and restoring wolves, however, they also work to help bears, birds, marine mammals and bison. Defenders view is that wild things and wild places shape the future of American character. They oppose all trapping that, inflicts pain, causes injury, damages ecological systems, or is conducted for profit or recreational reasons. It is their stance that we as a Nation should take responsibility to save what s left of the wilderness and help re-establish the threatened and exposed in order to terminate unnecessary inflicted suffering and destruction.

Constituencies: issues, actions and interaction

Defenders of Wildlife have not only built this organization up from the ground, but now have over 380,000 members and supporters. Due to the nature of wildlife conservation and the many organizations world wide that share the same view, Defenders of Wildlife instituted a project called GREEN , which is the network to come to for information and help in facing the challenges of grassroots activism. With GREEN advocates can depend on help targeted toward the issues they are working. While GREEN will not purport to speak for the grassroots, nor are they an advocate for positions of Defenders of Wildlife, they will however, engage in appropriate advocacy on clearly defined issues. GREEN currently supports over 300 groups and supporters nationwide. These supporters and advocates include the Sierra Club, Center for Marine Conservation, Trust for Public Land, World Wildlife Fund, Scenic America, Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, National Parks and Conservation Association, The Wilderness Society and The National Trust for Historic Preservation, to name but a few.

Among the targeted constituencies are those political actors that exert influence, power and the ability to help solve the many important issues by implementing positive legislation for the sake of wildlife and all lands in this country. In recent years Defenders has steadily gained recognition and built relationships with influential actors in the political arena through their consistent lobbying and advocating efforts. While many Senators, Representatives, law firms, the Federal Court and even the President have joined them in their fight for effective legislative changes to protect the natural world, others have not been as responsive. Among these hard to reach populations has been the President of the United States, Congressmen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior, U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, National Guard, Border Patrol, and such organizations as The American Farm Bureau and New Mexico Cattlegrowers Association’s. Many of these organizations and departments focus their attentions toward oil and gas drilling, bomb testing, and driftnet fishing which is not only blocking the solution to environmental conservation but also violating the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) both of which are enacted today with help from Defenders.

Defenders is a unique organization that believes in empowerment and responsiveness in order to achieve a means. Their principals and cooperative community aspect has given them leverage in promoting and affecting the shape of developmental change. Defenders, most often, have support from other organizations that also believe conservation is a priority, and not just an issue that needs to be addressed. On account of the issues Defenders struggle for, their partners are never far behind.

As the years pass the economy changes, political actors come and go and new preservation issues arise, it might be thought that a group like Defenders would change their position with the changing of the seasons. However, as Outside Magazine has been quoted saying: Of all the wildlife groups, Defenders of Wildlife has stayed closest to its original purpose to protect species and habitat. It remains lean and focused This is a prime example of how even though the problem may change, Defenders of Wildlife have instead rather employed of new methods to handle rising issues and have yet remained accessible and un-compromised in their fight for wildlife justice.

Strategic Goals

Defenders of wildlife have many visions and ideas for a better future. Their two main overarching goals, in their effort to protect wildlife, are species conservation and habitat preservation. While their aspirations may not be attainable through any one action; Defenders succeeds in making their goals winnable by breaking down the larger mission into smaller, more manageable steps and stages. They do this by identifying significant wildlife areas that need action and employ effective tasks to implement them. Some of their focus areas include, wolf restoration, grazing issues, marine mammal protection. They have also established a network community of supporters and activists and an outreach program to help them accomplish their purpose. This method helps them achieve both their immediate goals while still working in context to operationalize solutions for what they view as the larger picture. Although Defenders operate to remedy certain target issues, they always remain dedicated to their original intent.

\*\*Please note that sections B and C were combined due to the nature of the questions and the interconnectedness of the issue.