



*Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.*  
– James Baldwin –

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I've always loved the unusual names that have been given to various groups of animals. There's a business of ferrets, a parliament of owls, and, one of my favorites, an exaltation of larks. By some counts more than two hundred curious and sometimes humorous names have been assigned to animal groups around the planet.

I've been thinking a lot about groups lately as I prepare to leave my post as Executive Director at Wilburforce Foundation at the end of this month. Over the past twenty-five years I've been privileged to work with many groups—our grantees, First Nations, scientists, policy makers, activists—just to name a few. Sometimes I imagined various animal group names applied to those I worked with: a shrewdness of apes, a siege of herons, a richness of martens, a prickle of porcupines—all names that reflected the strengths and characters of the groups' participants.

Names mean a lot to me, especially when they've been accumulated over twenty-five years. I remember the names of many remarkable places I've seen and the even more remarkable people who showed me those places. Some of those I worked with are no longer among us, some are as strong as or stronger than when I first met them many years ago, and some are stepping up to be the leaders of tomorrow. All are deserving of my utmost respect, admiration, and gratitude.

I've seen people struggle for decades to protect the places they love, endure hardships and persecution while standing up for what they believe in, and steadfastly defend their homelands against overwhelming odds. I've also seen dozens of new national and provincial parks, national monuments, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, First Nation conservancies, and other important land and waters safeguarded for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. All of this has happened by our coming together, no matter what we call our groups.

In coming together we learn about each other, learn about our histories, our common interests, our differences, and, ultimately, our humanity. We also learn more about the places where we live and work, the places we love and the places that others call home.

It's going to be more important than ever for us to come together in the months ahead. Some people want to keep us from working together by using names to alienate us from one another—names intended to separate us rather than bring us together. We can't let this happen.

We have to be strong together, strong as a convocation of eagles or a coalition of cheetahs. We know how to defend the people, places and animals we love; we've done it many times before. But we also know we can find new ways forward, new solutions using new concepts or new technologies. More than anything, we need to embrace our strengths as groups and as individuals. We need to support one another, day in and day out.

Wilburforce Foundation will be part of these efforts through our long-term commitment to supporting our grantees and our mission. We have not and will not divert from our commitment to protecting important lands, waters, and wildlife in Western North America. Our board and staff remain firmly dedicated to our vision, our values, and our approach. We know that lasting change can only come about through investing in science, capacity and advocacy, and we will continue to do so in order to advance the best conservation solutions.

As we've announced, Paul Beaudet, our current Associate Director, will succeed me as Executive Director starting January 1<sup>st</sup>. Paul has been part of our foundation since 1999, and he has been influential in building our operations and developing our goals. I know we'll all continue to benefit from Paul's knowledge, expertise and devotion, and I am very grateful to him for embracing his new role with his spirited passion and commitment.

I also want to let you know that Wendy Vanasselt will be responsible for our Conservation Law and Policy Program starting in January. Wendy joined Wilburforce in 2010 and has been leading our Alaska/British Columbia program for the past six years. Prior to joining us Wendy worked for eighteen years in Washington, DC for conservation organizations and as legislative staff for the Committee on Natural Resources for the U.S. House of Representatives. Her background gives her significant knowledge about federal policy and the inner workings of Congress. Wendy will continue in her role for the Alaska/British Columbia program as well as heading our Law and Policy Program, and she'll be strongly supported in both roles by our Program Associate Carol Orr.

I'll remain on the board of directors of Wilburforce Foundation, so for me my retirement is simply a stepping back and not a stepping away. If you have any questions about the coming changes here at our foundation, please don't hesitate to reach out to [Paul](#) or [me](#). We welcome your questions, comments and thoughts.

In closing, I want to thank each and every one of you for inspiring me every day. There are many ways I could compare your courage and tenacity to that of the wildlife we strive to protect, but for now I'll just say you are my tower of giraffes, my bouquet of pheasants, and my rhumba of rattlesnakes. I especially like the mental image of that last one.

Onward and upward,



Tim Greyhavens

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