



Rodger Schlickeisen

President & Chief Executive Officer

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Mr. David M. Zaslav
President and CEO
Discovery Communications Inc.
One Discovery Place
Silver Spring
Maryland, 20910

March 30, 2010

Dear Mr. Zaslav:

I am writing to you on behalf of the nearly one million members and activists of Defenders of Wildlife to implore you not to broadcast “Sarah Palin’s Alaska”, and to urge you to discontinue Discovery Communications’ business relationship with former Alaska governor Sarah Palin.

Palin’s extreme record and positions on wildlife issues that our members, and indeed millions more Americans, care deeply about should raise serious reservations about whether she is someone with whom your company should want to be associated. I know that, like many Americans, Defenders members are wildlife-lovers in all aspects of their lives, including the television they watch. But Sarah Palin’s presence on the TLC channel could seriously compromise the reputation and integrity of all Discovery Communications ventures – including Animal Planet, Treehugger, Planet Green and Pet Finder to name but a few.

In case you are unaware of Palin’s record during her short time in office, here are just a handful of the many anti-wildlife, anti-conservation policies that she has actively promoted or espoused:

Sarah Palin actively promoted and expanded the now infamous aerial hunting of wolves and bears throughout her time in office. She opposed a ballot measure campaign seeking to end the practice. She even went as far as to approve a \$400,000 state-funded campaign aimed at swaying people’s votes on the issue.

Even more gruesomely, Palin’s administration tried to offer a \$150 bounty to hunters who presented the severed right fore-leg of each wolf they killed.

Sarah Palin actively opposed protecting polar bears under the Endangered Species Act, despite the fact that Alaska’s top marine mammal biologists agreed with federal scientists who believed the polar bear should be protected as a result of the devastating impacts of global warming on the bear’s Arctic sea ice habitat. She wrote the Secretary of the Interior urging him not to list the polar bear on the grounds it might hurt oil and gas development in the state. After the bear was listed, she filed suit seeking to overturn the federal decision to protect polar bears.

Before abruptly resigning from office, Palin also indicated her intention to file a lawsuit to block Endangered Species Act protections for Cook Inlet beluga whales. Again, she cited the Endangered Species Act listing as a threat to oil and gas development, despite the fact that the population of Cook Inlet beluga whales has decreased from 1,300 in the 1980s to about 326 today.

Governor Palin is a global warming denier. This is particularly shocking considering her own state is on the front lines of climate change, with wildlife and people already being seriously impacted.

And finally, Palin is an avid supporter of drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, an already imperiled area of significant biological uniqueness.

I hope the stark reality of what Sarah Palin really stands for, along with the many messages of outrage you are receiving, is enough to prompt a reversal of the decision to broadcast "Sarah Palin's Alaska". Unless Mark Burnett Productions intends to shine a light on the reality of Palin's extreme views, any final product would be viewed by millions as disingenuous at best and insulting at worst. Moreover, providing this broadcast platform for Palin's extreme anti-conservation agenda will undermine the credibility of Discovery Communications as a source of objective scientific information about our planet and the environmental threats we face.

Frankly, Discovery's pursuit of this somewhat obscene project in the face of widespread knowledge about Sarah Palin's grotesque anti-wildlife views and activities seem to suggest that it is willing to degrade its own product and reputation if the price is right. I and our hundreds of thousands of supporters would be pleased to see any evidence indicating that is untrue. But the best evidence would be if the company cancelled the Palin project.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this matter. Please contact Susan McDaid on [REDACTED] if you would like to set up a meeting to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,



Rodger Schlickeisen
President