

Glenda Wiles

From: C. Grandstaff <grandstaff@cybernet1.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 4, 2018 3:03 PM
To: Glenda Wiles
Cc: Ray Hawk; Greg Chilcott; Jeff Burrows; Chris A. Hoffman; Doug Schallenberger
Subject: Fwd: Emailing: Dark Money Letter

Commissioners,

It appears you've been conned by, ironically, "dark money" when you agreed to sign a letter to AG Tim Fox about dark money.

Following is an email from Dave Chadwick, Executive Director of the Montana Wildlife Federation, one of the citizen groups you maligned when you signed the dark money letter. Dave was responding to my question asking who actually wrote the letter because I know and, in fact, everyone knows, the Ravalli County Commission did not write the letter.

Here is his response:

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dave Chadwick <dchadwick@mtwf.org>
Subject: Re: Emailing: Dark Money Letter
Date: August 3, 2018 at 1:49:36 PM MDT
To: Carlotta Grandstaff <grandstaff@cybernet1.com>

I don't know who actually wrote that letter. To clarify - it is a little more complicated than that. Forgive me in advance for a long email that lays out their agenda (and their rather ironic tactic of using dark money to attack us for allegedly receiving dark money).

The publication cited by the Ravalli County Commissioners in their letter - the "Green Decoys" report - says it was commissioned by the "Montana Outdoor Coalition" but it includes no contact info or identifying information for that coalition. So that's one interesting bit of irony. The "Green Decoys" report - which is full of unsubstantiated allegations - is from a Washington DC outfit called the "Environmental Policy Alliance" which is itself a subsidiary of the "Center for Organizational Research and Education" which is in turn by Richard Berman, a DC political who works for the oil and gas industry (and presumably others) to attack conservation groups. (Berman is the executive director of the "Center for Organizational Research and Education", which also pays his private firm, Berman & Co, \$1.7 million a year to provide "management services" to the organization - giving his clients a big tax break, and hiding their money).

Confused? You should be. This is exactly how Berman operates, by creating confusing webs of false-front entities to spread misinformation about conservation groups - he explicitly admitted this in a speech he gave to an industry group a few years ago. He takes secret donations to create hard-to-trace front groups to attack the credibility of conservation groups through an "endless war" of "fear and anger." *"People always ask me one question all the time: 'How do I know that I won't be found out as a supporter of what you're doing?' " Mr. Berman told the crowd. "We run all of this stuff through nonprofit organizations that are insulated from having to disclose donors. There is total anonymity. People don't know who supports us."*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/31/us/politics/pr-executives-western-energy-alliance-speech-taped.html>

Berman takes all his secret money and runs ads and writes "reports" that make utterly false allegations about organizations like MWF. I am not going to bother responding to all of them, because that is exactly what Berman and his cronies want - to make conservationists spend our time defending our organization from their lies instead of working to advance our conservation mission. Bottom line, as you know: we are an 80 year old membership-based organization and our operations and finances are transparent and completely in compliance with the law, and of course we get no "foreign money." Our effectiveness at speaking up for Montana's wildlife, land, and water doesn't make everybody happy, but it is just sad to see the Ravalli County Commission being manipulated so easily by a Washington DC political consultant. They are being thrown lies, and they are swallowing the hook.

Anyhow, glad to talk more. Thanks for all you do in the Valley to fight for conservation!

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