



Testimony

[Home](#) • [News](#) • [Testimony](#) • [The Threat of Eco-Terrorism](#)



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Forests and Forest Health
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Good morning Chairman McNinnis, Vice-Chairman Peterson, Congressman Inslee and Members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to have the opportunity to appear before you and discuss the threat posed by eco-terrorism, as well as the measures being taken by the FBI and our law enforcement partners to address this threat.

The FBI divides the terrorist threat facing the United States into two broad categories, international and domestic. International terrorism involves violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any state, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any state. Acts of international terrorism are intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence the policy of a government, or affect the conduct of a government. These acts transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate, or the locale in which perpetrators operate.

Domestic terrorism is the unlawful use, or threatened use, of violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States (or its territories) without foreign direction, committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

During the past decade we have witnessed dramatic changes in the nature of the terrorist threat. In the 1990s, right-wing extremism overtook left-wing terrorism as the most dangerous domestic terrorist threat to the country. During the past several years, special interest extremism, as characterized by the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), has emerged as a serious terrorist threat. Generally, extremist groups engage in much activity that is protected by constitutional guarantees of free speech and assembly. Law enforcement becomes involved when the volatile talk of these groups transgresses into unlawful action. The FBI estimates that the ALF/ELF have committed more than 600 criminal acts in the United States since 1996, resulting in damages in excess of 43 million dollars.

Special interest terrorism differs from traditional right-wing and left-wing terrorism in that extremist special interest groups seek to resolve specific issues, rather than effect widespread political change. Special interest extremists continue to conduct acts of politically motivated violence to force segments of society, including the general public, to change attitudes about issues considered important to their causes. These groups occupy the extreme fringes of animal rights, pro-life, environmental, anti-nuclear, and other movements. Some special interest extremists -- most notably within the animal rights and environmental movements -- have turned increasingly toward vandalism and terrorist activity in attempts to further their causes.

Since 1977, when disaffected members of the ecological preservation group Greenpeace formed the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and attacked commercial fishing operations by cutting drift nets, acts of "eco-terrorism" have occurred around the globe. The FBI defines eco-terrorism as the use or threatened use of violence of a criminal nature against innocent victims or property by an environmentally-oriented, subnational group for environmental-political reasons, or aimed at an audience beyond the target, often of a symbolic nature.

In recent years, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) has become one of the most active extremist elements in the United States. Despite the destructive aspects of ALF's operations, its operational philosophy discourages acts that harm "any animal, human and nonhuman." Animal rights groups in the United States, including the ALF, have generally adhered to this mandate. The ALF, established in Great Britain in the mid-1970s, is a loosely organized movement committed to ending the abuse and exploitation of animals. The American branch of the ALF began its operations in the late 1970s. Individuals become members of the ALF not by filing paperwork or paying dues, but simply by engaging in "direct action" against companies or individuals who utilize animals for research or economic gain. "Direct action" generally occurs in the form of criminal activity to cause economic loss or to destroy the victims' company operations. The ALF activists have engaged in a steadily growing

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- 08.05.15 Inspector General Access**
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campaign of illegal activity against fur companies, mink farms, restaurants, and animal research laboratories.

Estimates of damage and destruction in the United States claimed by the ALF during the past ten years, as compiled by national organizations such as the Fur Commission and the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR), put the fur industry and medical research losses at more than 45 million dollars. The ALF is considered a terrorist group, whose purpose is to bring about social and political change through the use of force and violence.

Disaffected environmentalists, in 1980, formed a radical group called "Earth First!" and engaged in a series of protests and civil disobedience events. In 1984, however, members introduced "tree spiking" (insertion of metal or ceramic spikes in trees in an effort to damage saws) as a tactic to thwart logging. In 1992, the ELF was founded in Brighton, England, by Earth First! members who refused to abandon criminal acts as a tactic when others wished to mainstream Earth First!. In 1993, the ELF was listed for the first time along with the ALF in a communique declaring solidarity in actions between the two groups. This unity continues today with a crossover of leadership and membership. It is not uncommon for the ALF and the ELF to post joint declarations of responsibility for criminal actions on their websites. In 1994, founders of the San Francisco branch of Earth First! published in *The Earth First! Journal* a recommendation that Earth First! mainstream itself in the United States, leaving criminal acts other than unlawful protests to the ELF.

The ELF advocates "monkeywrenching," a euphemism for acts of sabotage and property destruction against industries and other entities perceived to be damaging to the natural environment. "Monkeywrenching" includes tree spiking, arson, sabotage of logging or construction equipment, and other types of property destruction. Speeches given by Jonathan Paul and Craig Rosebraugh at the 1998 National Animal Rights Conference held at the University of Oregon, promoted the unity of both the ELF and the ALF movements. The ELF posted information on the ALF website until it began its own website in January 2001, and is listed in the same underground activist publications as the ALF.

The most destructive practice of the ALF/ELF is arson. The ALF/ELF members consistently use improvised incendiary devices equipped with crude but effective timing mechanisms. These incendiary devices are often constructed based upon instructions found on the ALF/ELF websites. The ALF/ELF criminal incidents often involve pre-activity surveillance and well-planned operations. Members are believed to engage in significant intelligence gathering against potential targets, including the review of industry/trade publications, photographic/video surveillance of potential targets, and posting details about potential targets on the internet.

The ALF and the ELF have jointly claimed credit for several raids including a November 1997 attack of the Bureau of Land Management wild horse corrals near Burns, Oregon, where arson destroyed the entire complex resulting in damages in excess of four hundred and fifty thousand dollars and the June 1998 arson attack of a U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal Damage Control Building near Olympia, Washington, in which damages exceeded two million dollars. The ELF claimed sole credit for the October 1998, arson of a Vail, Colorado, ski facility in which four ski lifts, a restaurant, a picnic facility and a utility building were destroyed. Damage exceeded \$12 million. On 12/27/1998, the ELF claimed responsibility for the arson at the U.S. Forest Industries Office in Medford, Oregon, where damages exceeded five hundred thousand dollars. Other arsons in Oregon, New York, Washington, Michigan, and Indiana have been claimed by the ELF. Recently, the ELF has also claimed attacks on genetically engineered crops and trees. The ELF claims these attacks have totaled close to \$40 million in damages.

The name of a group called the Coalition to Save the Preserves (CSP), surfaced in relation to a series of arsons that occurred in the Phoenix, Arizona, area. These arsons targeted several new homes under construction near the North Phoenix Mountain Preserves. No direct connection was established between the CSP and ALF/ELF. However, the stated goal of CSP to stop development of previously undeveloped lands, is similar to that of the ELF. The property damage associated with the arsons has been estimated to be in excess of \$5 million.

The FBI has developed a strong response to the threats posed by domestic and international terrorism. Between fiscal years 1993 and 2003, the number of Special Agents dedicated to the FBI's counterterrorism programs grew by approximately 224 percent to 1,669 -- nearly 16 percent of all FBI Special Agents. In recent years, the FBI has strengthened its counterterrorism program to enhance its abilities to carry out these objectives.

Cooperation among law enforcement agencies at all levels represents an important component of a comprehensive response to terrorism. This cooperation assumes its most tangible operational form in the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) that are established in 44 cities across the nation. These task forces are particularly well-suited to responding to terrorism because they combine the national and international investigative resources of the FBI with the street-level expertise of local law enforcement agencies. Given the success of the JTTF concept, the FBI has established 15 new JTTFs since the end of 1999. By the end of 2003 the FBI plans to have established JTTFs in each of its 56 field offices. By integrating the investigative abilities of the FBI and local law enforcement agencies, these task forces represent an effective response to the threats posed to U.S. communities by domestic and international terrorists.

The FBI and our law enforcement partners have made a number of arrests of individuals alleged to have perpetrated acts of eco-terrorism. Several of these individuals have been successfully prosecuted. Following the investigation of the Phoenix, Arizona, arsons noted earlier, Mark Warren Sands was indicted and arrested on 6/14/2001. On 11/07/2001, Sands pleaded guilty to ten counts of extortion and using fire in the commission of a federal felony.

In February 2001, teenagers Jared McIntyre, Matthew Rammelkamp, and George Mashkow all pleaded

Department of Justice Associate Deputy Attorney
General Carlos Uriarte Before the Senate Judiciary
Committee, Washington, D.C.

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guilty, as adults, to title 18 U.S.C. 844(i), Arson, and 844(n), Arson Conspiracy. These charges pertain to a series of arsons and attempted arsons of new home construction sites in Long Island, New York. An adult, Connor Cash, was also arrested on February 15, 2001, and charged under the same federal statutes. Jared McIntyre stated that these acts were committed in sympathy of the ELF movement. The New York Joint Terrorism Task Force played a significant role in the arrest and prosecution of these individuals.

On 1/23/2001, Frank Ambrose was arrested by officers of the Department of Natural Resources with assistance from the Indianapolis JTTF, on a local warrant out of Monroe County Circuit Court, Bloomington, Indiana, charging Ambrose with timber spiking. Ambrose is suspected of involvement in the spiking of approximately 150 trees in Indiana state forests. The ELF claimed responsibility for these incidents.

On September 16, 1998, a federal grand jury in the Western District of Wisconsin indicted Peter Young and Justin Samuel for Hobbs Act violations as well as for animal enterprise terrorism. Samuel was apprehended in Belgium, and was subsequently extradited to the United States. On August 30, 2000, Samuel pleaded guilty to two counts of animal enterprise terrorism and was sentenced on November 3, 2000, to two years in prison, two years probation, and ordered to pay \$364,106 in restitution. Samuel's prosecution arose out of his involvement in mink releases in Wisconsin in 1997. This incident was claimed by the ALF. The investigation and arrest of Justin Samuel were the result of a joint effort by federal, state, and local agencies.

On April 20, 1997, Douglas Joshua Ellerman turned himself in and admitted on videotape to purchasing, constructing, and transporting five pipe bombs to the scene of the March 11, 1997, arson at the Fur Breeders Agricultural co-op in Sandy, Utah. Ellerman also admitted setting fire to the facility. Ellerman was indicted on June 19, 1997 on 16 counts, and eventually pleaded guilty to three. He was sentenced to seven years in prison and restitution of approximately \$750,000. Though this incident was not officially claimed by ALF, Ellerman indicated during an interview subsequent to his arrest that he was a member of ALF. This incident was investigated jointly by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF).

Rodney Adam Coronado was convicted for his role in the February 2, 1992, arson at an animal research laboratory on the campus of Michigan State University. Damage estimates, according to public sources, approached \$200,000 and included the destruction of research records. On July 3, 1995, Coronado pled guilty for his role in the arson and was sentenced to 57 months in federal prison, three years probation, and restitution of more than \$2 million. This incident was claimed by ALF. The FBI, ATF, and the Michigan State University police played a significant role in the investigation, arrest, and prosecution.

Marc Leslie Davis, Margaret Katherine Millet, Marc Andre Baker, and Ilse Washington Asplund were all members of the self-proclaimed "Evan Mecham Eco-Terrorist International Conspiracy" (EMETIC). EMETIC was formed to engage in eco-terrorism against nuclear power plants and ski resorts in the southwestern United States. In November 1987, the group claimed responsibility for damage to a chairlift at the Fairfield Snow Bowl Ski Resort near Flagstaff, Arizona. Davis, Millet, and Baker were arrested in May 1989 on charges relating to the Fairfield Snow Bowl incident and planned incidents at the Central Arizona Project and Palo Verde nuclear generating stations in Arizona; the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Facility in California; and the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility in Colorado. All pleaded guilty and were sentenced in September 1991. Davis was sentenced to six years in federal prison, and restitution to the Fairfield Snow Bowl Ski Resort in the amount of \$19,821. Millet was sentenced to three years in federal prison, and restitution to Fairfield in the amount of \$19,821. Baker was sentenced to one year in federal prison, five months probation, a \$5,000 fine, and 100 hours of community service. Asplund was also charged and was sentenced to one year in federal prison, five years probation, a \$2,000 fine, and 100 hours of community service.

Currently, more than 26 FBI field offices have pending investigations associated with ALF/ELF activities. Despite all of our efforts (increased resources allocated, JTTFs, successful arrests and prosecutions), law enforcement has a long way to go to adequately address the problem of eco-terrorism. Groups such as the ALF and the ELF present unique challenges. There is little if any hierarchal structure to such entities. Eco-terrorists are unlike traditional criminal enterprises which are often structured and organized.

The difficulty investigating such groups is demonstrated by the fact that law enforcement has thus far been unable to effect the arrests of anyone for some recent criminal activity directed at federal land managers or their offices. However, there are several ongoing investigations regarding such acts. Current investigations include the 10/14/2001 arson at the Bureau of Land Management Wild Horse and Burro Corral in Litchfield, California, the 7/20/2000 destruction of trees and damage to vehicles at the U.S. Forestry Science Laboratory in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, and the 11/29/1997 arson at the Bureau of Land Management Corral in Burns, Oregon.

Before closing, I would like to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance rendered by the U.S. Forest Service in investigating incidents of eco-terrorism. Specifically, I would like to recognize the assistance that the Forest Service is providing with regard to the ongoing investigation of the 7/20/2000 incident of vandalism and destruction that occurred at the U.S. Forestry Science Laboratory in Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

The FBI and all of our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners will continue to strive to address the difficult and unique challenges posed by eco-terrorists. Despite the recent focus on international terrorism, we remain fully cognizant of the full range of threats that confront the United States.

Chairman McInnis and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would like to express appreciation for your concentration on the issue of eco-terrorism and I look forward to responding to any questions.

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