

## **HSUS's Financial and Ethical Obligations to the Chimpanzees at Project Chimps and the New Iberia Research Center**

From [Donny Moss, TheirTurn.net](https://www.theirturn.net)

December 2021

Since June 2020, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has come under public scrutiny over its failure to provide a humane retirement for the chimpanzees at Project Chimps, its sanctuary in Georgia that is home to 82 former lab chimpanzees. When, in 2020, whistleblowers and animal rights groups, including the Nonhuman Rights Project and PETA, began calling on HSUS to improve welfare conditions, HSUS took steps to distance itself from the sanctuary instead of fulfilling its obligations to the chimpanzees.



*Project Chimps, a Humane Society of the United States chimpanzee sanctuary in Georgia that has been in the spotlight since 2020 over poor animal welfare conditions.*

The following report details the conflicts of interest and obfuscation that have enabled HSUS to provide substandard care to the chimpanzees while giving the public the impression that Project Chimps is a true sanctuary. It also describes HSUS's obligation to the approximately 110 chimpanzees waiting to be rescued from the New Iberia Research Center, a laboratory at the University of Louisiana.



Whistleblowers and animal rights groups erected a billboard near Project Chimps to raise awareness of the plight of the chimpanzees at the HSUS sanctuary.

### Who are the stakeholders?

**New Iberia Research Center (NIRC)** – The NIRC is a biomedical research facility at the University of Louisiana that, until 2015, bred chimpanzees, used them in experiments and leased them to other laboratories. When chimpanzee research in the United States ended in 2015, NIRC retired the 220 chimpanzees that it owned in the laboratory itself.

**Project Chimps** – Project Chimps is a Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) sanctuary in Northern Georgia that was incorporated in 2014 and is home to chimpanzees owned by NIRC. The original contract between Project Chimps and NIRC, signed in 2015, indicates that Project Chimps intended to transfer all 220 chimpanzees from NIRC to the sanctuary by the end of 2020.

**The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)** – HSUS is a Washington, D.C.-based animal protection organization. With annual revenues of between \$125 and \$160 million, it is the wealthiest animal protection organization in the world. In 2020, HSUS had over \$284 million in net assets and spent \$28.4 million in fundraising. That year, Forbes ranked HSUS number 78 on its list of the wealthiest 100 charities in the United States.

**The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS)** – GFAS is a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit that sets standards that sanctuaries must meet in order to receive its coveted accreditation. Since being founded in 2007 by two HSUS executives (and two others who were not affiliated with HSUS), GFAS has had close administrative and financial ties to HSUS.

### How was Project Chimps created?

In 2014, Sarah Baeckler and Bruce Wagman, both of whom were attorneys and chimp advocates, met with the University of Louisiana to ask if it would release the 220 chimps it owned at NIRC to a sanctuary. When the university agreed, they incorporated Project Chimps, and Wagman became the

Chairman of the Board. As an outside attorney for HSUS, Wagman had a close working relationship with the organization and solicited its support in the expensive endeavor of creating Project Chimps. In 2015, HSUS helped Project Chimps purchase a defunct gorilla sanctuary in Georgia that would serve as Project Chimps' home. In exchange, HSUS took over a majority of seats on Project Chimps' Board of Directors and ["fully integrated"](#) the sanctuary into the organization.

# PROJECT CHIMPS

MORGANTON, GA 30560-2662 | TAX-EXEMPT SINCE APRIL 2015

## Form 990 for period ending December 2015

(1) MARSHA PERELMAN DIRECTOR AND TREASURER	<b>HSUS</b>	(7) ELIZABETH BRADHAM DIRECTOR	<b>HSUS</b>
(2) BRUCE WAGMAN BOARD CHAIR AND SECRETARY	<b>HSUS</b>	(8) BENJAMIN CALLISON DIRECTOR	<b>HSUS</b>
(3) ERIC L BERNTHAL ESQ DIRECTOR	<b>HSUS</b>	(9) KATHLEEN CONLEE DIRECTOR	<b>HSUS</b>
(4) ANDREW ROWAN PhD Director	<b>HSUS</b>	(10) G THOMAS WAITE III ASSISTANT SECRETARY	<b>HSUS</b>
(5) ADRIENNE ARMSTRONG DIRECTOR		(11) SARAH BAECKLER DAVIS CEO AND PRESIDENT	
(6) BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG DIRECTOR			

After Project Chimps was incorporated, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) took control of its Board of Directors, thereby taking responsibility for the welfare of the 220 chimpanzees that Project Chimps committed to rescuing from the New Iberia Research Center (NIRC) at the University of Louisiana.

In December 2015, the University of Louisiana and Project Chimps signed a contract that stipulated that the University would pay Project Chimps up to \$19,000 for each of the 220 chimps it took over a five-year period. After five years, Project Chimps would have to pay the University a penalty of \$42.24/day for every chimp it left behind. Project Chimps therefore had a strong financial incentive to take in all 220 chimps within five years (by the end of 2020).



## ORIGINAL CONTRACT (2015) BETWEEN PROJECT CHIMPS AND UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA

(d) For every Chimpanzee that Project Chimps removes from the NIRC in year one (1) of the Agreement, UL Lafayette shall pay to Project Chimps a one-time payment of \$19,000. For every Chimpanzee that Project Chimps removes from the NIRC in year two (2) of the Agreement, UL Lafayette shall pay to Project Chimps a one-time payment of \$10,000. For every Chimpanzee that Project Chimps removes from the NIRC in years three (3), four (4) and five (5), UL Lafayette shall make a one-time payment of \$5,000. For purposes of this subparagraph, year one shall begin on the earlier date of (1) June 1, 2016 or (2) the transfer of the first of the Chimpanzees from the NIRC by Project Chimps;

(b) Beginning on the date of the execution of this Agreement, Project Chimps shall have five (5) years to effect the removal of all of the Chimpanzees from the NIRC. If Project Chimps fails to transfer all of the Chimpanzees from the NIRC within the five (5) years, Project Chimps shall pay to UL Lafayette \$42.24 per day, which is two times the agreed-upon cost per day, for each Chimpanzee remaining at the NIRC until that Chimpanzee is transferred therefrom. Any amounts owed to UL Lafayette by Project Chimps under this Section 1 shall be calculated on a monthly basis. If Project Chimps fails to pay said amount within ten (10) days of written request, UL Lafayette shall have the right to terminate this Agreement as to any Chimpanzees remaining at the NIRC.

The 2015 contract between the University of Louisiana and Project Chimps. The contract was amended in 2019 to remove the penalty and the understanding that Project Chimps would take all 220 chimpanzees. By the end of 2019, Project Chimps had taken in 80 of the reported 220 chimps at NIRC. If it didn't rescue the remaining NIRC chimps by the end of 2020, then it would have to pay the University a penalty of approximately \$177,000/month, according to the contract. In July 2019, however, the University removed the penalty from the contract, eliminating any sense of urgency around expanding Project Chimps to accommodate the remaining NIRC chimpanzees. The amended contract also removed the language indicating that Project Chimps would take all of the chimpanzees. These significant changes to the contract, which appear to be an attempt by HSUS to minimize its expenses associated with expanding Project Chimps, could sentence many of the remaining NIRC chimps to life in the lab.

## **AMENDED CONTRACT (2019) BETWEEN PROJECT CHIMPS AND UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA**

### **University of Louisiana Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.pdf**

**WHEREAS**, UL Lafayette currently bears the cost of providing lifetime care and maintenance for the Chimpanzees, which is and will continue to be very costly and burdensome to UL Lafayette, and Project Chimps desires to undertake the cost and burden in order to provide sanctuary for the Chimpanzees; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parties want to provide for the transfer of ownership, rights and obligations of some of the Chimpanzees from UL Lafayette to Project Chimps.

#### **Section 2. UL Lafayette Obligations**

(a) UL Lafayette shall release and transfer to Project Chimps all rights of ownership and possession of as many of its Chimpanzees as it deems appropriate. With respect to each of the Chimpanzees that UL releases and transfers all rights of ownership and possession, it shall also release and transfer any and all responsibilities with respect thereto, including all liability related to acts of that Chimpanzee and all obligations for the care of that Chimpanzee, at the time that it is loaded on the truck for transfer from the NIRC;

The revised contract between between Project Chimps and the University of Louisiana could sentence chimpanzees to life at the lab because it removed the language indicating that Project Chimps would rescue all 220 of them, and it removed the penalties to Project Chimps associated with leaving chimpanzees behind.

Today, Project Chimps has just 82 of the approximately 220 NIRC chimpanzees.

#### **What is the relationship between HSUS and Project Chimps?**

Project Chimps is an HSUS affiliate, and the organizations are operationally intertwined. HSUS manages Project Chimps's Information Technology department; pays its Executive Director; and files its tax returns. According to internal documents, Project Chimps employees are "HSUS professionals." In 2017, the sanctuary's Executive Director Ali Crumpacker sent an email to the staff indicating that Project Chimps would soon be "fully integrated" into HSUS.

**Ali Crumpacker** 12/19/17 AC

Fwd: FW: (IMPORTANT) Staff Technolo... [Details](#)

To: AllProje

**"Fully integrated into HSUS"**

While we are not fully integrated into HSUS just yet, our desktops are already managed under their IT department and additional devices will be issued later in 2018. If you are curious about the future tech that we will have, you can find that information below!

**Ali Crumpacker**  
Executive Director, Project Chimps

Volunteer Orientation - Project Chimps

Matthew Diaz matdiaz@gmail.com

Hi Matthew,

From: Matthew Diaz <matdiaz@gmail.com>

Please call: MatthewDiaz@humane.org

Date: Nov 15, 2020, 12:20 PM

Subject: Volunteer Orientation - Project Chimps

Thank you!

Matthew

Interchangeable email domains:  
Message sent to humane.org email address receives response from projectchimps.org email address

RE: [EXTERNAL] Volunteer Orientation - Project Chimps

Kathryn Durham kdurham@projectchimps.org

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2019 Performance Review

Employee	Matthew Diaz
Department	Chimpanzee Care
Job Title	Veterinary Assistant
Manager Name	Laura Mayo
Supervisor Name	Laura Mayo

For each of the following categories, indicate the level of performance demonstrated by the employee. Each level of performance is defined below. Comments are required to support the performance rating for each category and question.

**Project Chimps employees are "HSUS professionals"**

2-Met Expectations - employee consistently met the ambitious expectations of the role and did so modeling what is expected about habits of work.

1-Partially Met Expectations - employee did not rise to the level of fully accomplishing what is needed from the role and/or how they should conduct themselves as an HSUS professional.

**THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES**

Purchase Order

PO #: PO0002609  
PO Date: 04/27/2020  
Expiration Date: 09/30/2020

700 Professional Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879  
accounts.payableteam@humane.org

**Department Name: Project Chimps**

Vendor Name	Vendor ID	Item	Description	Department Name and Number	Local Currency	Amount
	V04853	51000	Consultants & Services	Project Chimps 368		\$20,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>						\$20,000.00

In an apparent attempt to absolve itself of its financial commitments to the chimpanzees and distance itself from the animal welfare controversy, HSUS has publicly claimed that Project Chimps is independent despite the fact that it has been “fully integrated” into HSUS since 2017 and despite the evidence that proves that Project Chimps is an HSUS affiliate.

In 2020, HSUS controlled 7 of the 11 seats on Project Chimps’s Board of Directors.



In 2020, 7 out of the 11 Project Chimps' board members worked for or served on the board of HSUS



## Board of Directors - 2020

Marsha Perlman	<b>HSUS</b> Board Member
Kathleen Conlee	<b>HSUS</b> Vice President
Adrienne & Billy Joe Armstrong	
Susan Atherton	<b>HSUS</b> Chairman of the Board
Kimberly Dinn	<b>HSUS</b> Vice President
Judy Greer & Dean Jonhsen	
Nicole Paquette	<b>HSUS</b> Chief Program & Policy Officer
Simon & Helen Law	
Amber Nash	
Elizabeth Bradham	<b>HSUS</b> Board Member
Bruce Wagman	<b>HSUS</b> Outside Lawyer

In 2020, HSUS held 64% of the seats on Project Chimps Board of Directors while simultaneously claiming that it did not have decision making power and that it merely provided financial support to the sanctuary.

When, in 2020, animal rights organizations began calling on HSUS to improve living conditions and animal care at Project Chimps, HSUS attempted to distance itself from the sanctuary – and its obligations to the chimpanzees – by removing several members of its leadership team from the sanctuary's Board of Directors. It also claimed that it was merely a financial supporter of Project Chimps, despite the evidence proving that the sanctuary had been fully integrated into HSUS.

Today, four HSUS leaders have a seat on the board of Project Chimps. In order to give the public the impression that HSUS has fewer seats on the board than it does, Project Chimps removed reference to HSUS from two of their bios.

Susan Atheron (San Francisco, California)  
Yolanda Berkowitz (Coral Gables, Florida)  
Georgina Bloomberg (New York, New York)  
J. Elizabeth Bradham (Charleston, South Carolina)  
Marcus East (Washington)  
Carolyn Everson (Montclair, New Jersey)  
Neil B. Fang, Esq., CPA (Hewlett Neck, New York)  
Caren M. Fleit (New York, New York)  
Robert A. Greenspon (Darien, Connecticut)  
Brad Jakeman (Bridgehampton, New York)  
Cathy Kangas (New Canaan, Connecticut)  
Sylvia T. Kaser, Esq. (Washington D.C.)  
Adi Kumar (Washington D.C.)  
Charles A. Laue (Leawood, Kansas)  
Kathleen M. Linehan, Esq. (Washington, D.C.)  
C. Thomas McMillen (Washington, D.C.)  
David S. Niekerk (Bothell, Washington)  
Sharon Lee Patrick (New York, New York)  
Marsha R. Perelman (Wynnewood, Pennsylvania)  
Thomas J. Sabatino Jr. (Greenwich, Connecticut)  
Suzy Welch (New York, New York)

Bruce Wagman, President

Bruce Waggoner, an animal lawyer, an expert strategist, and a true friend to animals, is a lawyer in the San Francisco office of national law firm *Bay Area Holmes & Narayana*, and has an admitted exclusive focus on a wide range of animal law matters, including litigation, education, legislative drafting and counseling, and consultation. He has practiced animal law since 1982 and represented clients in state and federal courts as well as negotiating and administrative proceedings. Bruce's clients include numerous animal protection organizations as well as private individuals. He is a founder of *Animal Law*, the first animal law e-newsletter, currently in its sixth edition, and coauthor of a *WashState of Animal Law*, which provides a broad perspective on animal law around the world. He has taught animal law since 1999 and currently teaches at *Three Bay Area law schools*.

Marsha Perelman is a keen businesswoman and philanthropist with extensive experience in fundraising, having chaired capital campaigns totaling over \$75 million. Marsha's career in the energy business began at The Buckeye Pipe Line Company and included service on the boards of two NYSE energy companies. Marsha is a former board chair of the Franklin Institute and the ASPCA, and former vice chair, president and CEO of The Philadelphia Zoo. She holds a bachelor's degree from [Northwestern University](#) and a master's degree from the [University of Pennsylvania](#).

research facility in South Carolina as the behavioral manager for more than 3,000 primates. There, she applied environmental enrichment and other strategies to reduce stress and help emotionally disturbed animals. She also worked as the Supervisor of Care at the Center for Great Apes, a sanctuary for chimpanzees and orangutans. Katie holds a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in public administration with a specialization in public policy.

Marsha Pereiman, Treasurer

Harsha Perera is a high-tech entrepreneur and philanthropist with extensive experience in fundraising, having raised capital campaigns totaling over \$5 million. He has a degree in energy business from the University of Pennsylvania.

**No mention of HSUS**

His resume lists his current position as president of the Franklin Institute Association, and former chairman, president and CEO of Philadelphia Zoo. He is a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania and a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

## Directors 2021

Elizabeth Brady began her career in investment banking at Salomon Brothers, Inc., in 1985, and later moved to the Mergers and Acquisitions Group at S.C. Warburg, Inc. Between 1995 and 2005, she was a partner at Rothschild, Inc. Her non-profit experience is focused primarily on early childhood education and animal welfare. She served on the board of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for 12 years and helped found two schools for underserved children in New York. She is past president of the Gibbes Museum, the Preservation Society of Charleston, Social Venture Partners Charleston and [Charleston Animal Society](#). She currently serves on the board of the [Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina](#). Elizabeth graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree from [Princeton University](#) and with distinction after earning a master's degree from [Harvard University](#). She and her husband share their home in Charleston, SC, with five rescued dogs.

**Adrienne and Billie Joe Armstrong**  
Project Energy's founding board members Billie Joe and Adrienne Armstrong are passionate supporters of human and animal welfare in Iowa. Billie Joe is the Iowa state of trial judge and Billie Joe of Iowa established and founded Iowa's leading animal shelter, Billie Joe's Animal Shelter, in 1994. Adrienne is a supporter of Project Energy, a charitable organization that provides financial support to various animal welfare and social justice groups in Iowa. Project Energy's mission is to provide financial support to various animal welfare and social justice groups in Iowa. Project Energy's mission is to provide financial support to various animal welfare and social justice groups in Iowa. Project Energy's mission is to provide financial support to various animal welfare and social justice groups in Iowa.

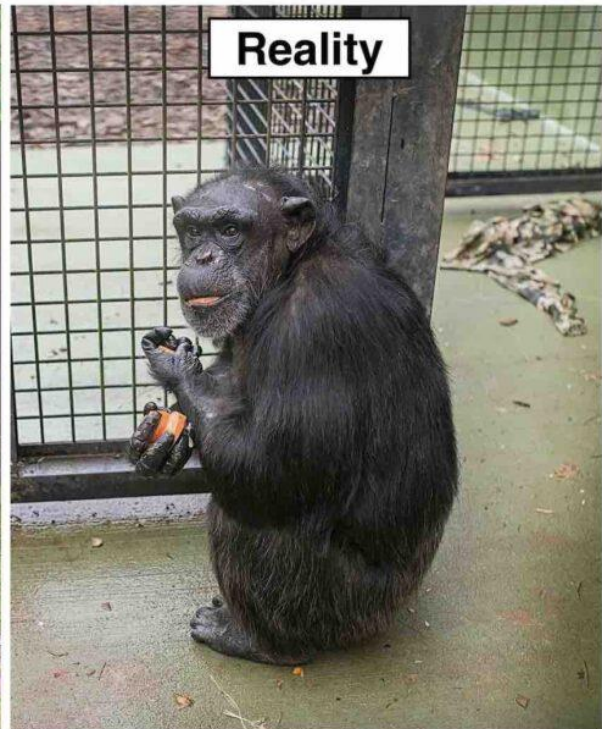
Compassion, Trustworthy Deeds, "You So Great King," "May I  
Appear Calm" "The Complete Guide to the Health, Influence, and  
Happiness," "Peace" and "Dharma" and from historical  
Compassion, Kind, Good Words, Life, and "at Home Guide."

Reference to HSUS was removed from the bios of Marsha Perelman and Elizabeth Bradham, giving the public the impression that HSUS has fewer seats on the board – and exerts less influence over Project Chimps – than it does.

**Given HSUS's vast wealth, why does animal welfare at Project Chimps fall short of the standards set by the North American sanctuary community?**

Project Chimps posts photos on social media that show chimpanzees enjoying a lush outdoor habitat and living their best possible lives in a captive setting. The day-to-day reality, however, is much different.





The 82 chimpanzees at HSUS sanctuary Project Chimps have access to the outdoors just once every three days, but Project Chimps' public statements and social media posts suggest that they spend every day in a natural setting.

Project Chimps sits on 236 forested acres. Only six of them (2.5%), however, serve as outdoor space for the chimps. This outdoor area, referred to as the "habitat," is divided into two yards, each of which can accommodate one group of chimps at a time. With six chimpanzee groups sharing two yards, each group has access to the habitat just once every three days (for four to six hours). The chimpanzees spend the rest of the time in covered, concrete rooms that have one or two open-air walls with metal bars. Because Project Chimps describes these concrete and metal enclosures as "outdoor porches," the public is led to believe that the chimpanzees spend seven days a week outside in a natural setting.

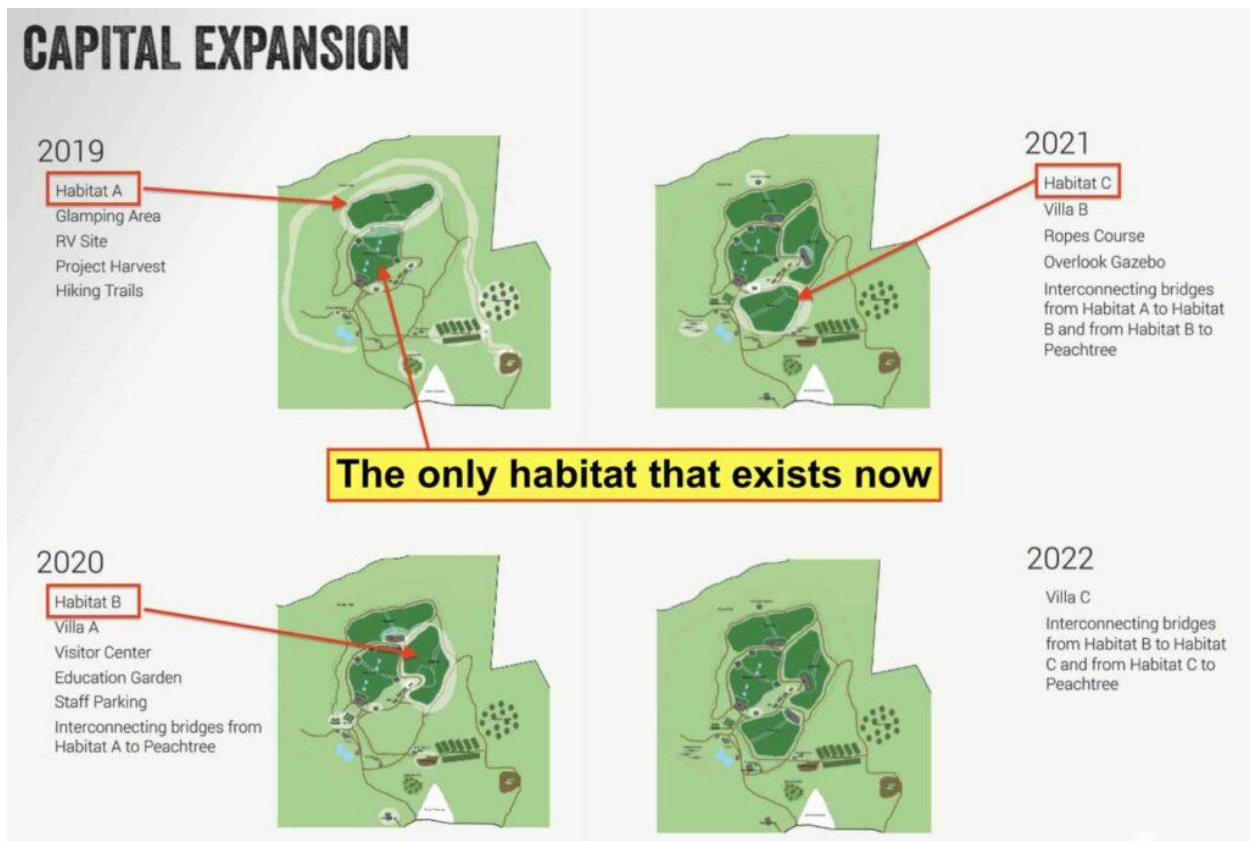


“The chimpanzees have outdoor access every day. Currently, every chimpanzee at Project Chimps has full-time access to a large outdoor porch.”



Whistleblowers and animal rights activists assert that HSUS and Project Chimps are misleading donors and the public by describing the concrete rooms where the chimpanzees spend their days as “outdoor porches.”

According to Project Chimps’ strategic plan, HSUS should have created three additional habitats at Project Chimps by now, but it hasn’t broken ground on any of them. HSUS hasn’t even announced a timeline for this desperately needed expansion.



HSUS was supposed to have created three additional habitats (A, B and C) by 2021, but it hasn't created any. As a result, the 82 chimps rotate into the one habitat just once every three days for part of the day. Despite the fact that sanctuaries are supposed to prioritize the needs of the animals, Project Chimps recently created hiking trails and banquet facilities for visitors.

The lack of sufficient habitat space for the chimpanzees begs several questions:

1. Why didn't HSUS create enough habitat space at Project Chimps in 2015, before it began bringing in chimpanzees from NIRC. And why, more than five years later, hasn't HSUS announced a timeline for new habitats?
2. Why does HSUS CEO Kitty Block [blame COVID](#) for the delay in creating additional habitats when HSUS should have broken ground on them several years before the pandemic?
3. With its enormous wealth, why does HSUS allow Project Chimps to remain a substandard facility compared to other chimpanzee sanctuaries in North America?
4. Why is HSUS withholding funds to improve and expand Project Chimps for the chimpanzees who are already there and for the 110 chimpanzees who are waiting to be rescued from NIRC? Twenty-six chimps have already died at NIRC while waiting.



Dear Friend of the Chimps,

Our team has worked incredibly hard this year to enrich the chimps with new murals in their homes and climbing structures in their yards. The medical team has almost completed vaccinating the chimps against COVID, and we brought in five new females who are just starting to settle into a bigger family unit as part of their changing world. We must move cautiously, but not slowly. Since we began this journey in 2014, 26 chimps have passed away waiting at the lab. If we slow down...how many chimps will never know sanctuary life?

We must move cautiously, but not slowly. Since we began this journey in 2014, 26 chimps have passed away waiting at the lab. If we slow down...how many chimps will never know sanctuary life?

As we settle in for the winter and get to know our newest residents, we are working on our plans for the new year. We continue to be cautious as the world recovers from the pandemic. Supply deliveries are hard to predict. The new staff positions we added are hard to fill. Audiences traveling in for our events may still be wary to confirm their plans.

According to Project Chimps, 26 chimpanzees have died at NIRC while waiting to be rescued. If HSUS had expanded Project Chimps when it took over its Board of Directors in 2015, then many of these chimps could have spent their final years in a sanctuary setting.

In May 2020, 22 employees and volunteers at Project Chimps wrote a letter to Bruce Wagman, the Chairman of the Board, to express their concerns about the lack of outdoor space and other serious welfare deficiencies. After Wagman dismissed their concerns, two former employees, Crystal Alba and Lindsay Vanderhoogt, launched a website, [HelpTheChimps](#), which exposed not only their grim day-to-day lives in concrete rooms, but also poor veterinary care and pervasive neglect. An inspection report written by primatologist Dr. Steve Ross, a chimpanzee behavior specialist, and an [investigative story published in National Geographic](#) corroborated some, if not many, of the whistleblowers' allegations.



## Blurred Assessment Report

### Executive Summary

This report details the findings of a chimpanzee welfare and management assessment conducted as part of the Project ChimpCARE initiative based at Lincoln Park Zoo. The goal of the assessment is to determine the extent to which Project Chimps sanctuary organization is implementing management practices that effectively address the welfare needs of their resident chimpanzees. Importantly, the assessment is both based on the extant scientific literature on chimpanzee welfare and is in the context of best practices in place at similar organizations that house chimpanzees. The assessment was conducted by Stephen Ross, Ph.D. director of the Lester E. Fisher Center for the Study and Conservation of Apes and founder of Project ChimpCARE.

Importantly, this assessment is part of a pilot project to create the welfare assessment tool. As such, Project Chimps is the first and only facility to be fully assessed using these methods at this time. We expect that the tool will continue to receive further refinements over time as other facilities are assessed using this tool.

The assessment used empirical measures of the chimpanzee management in place at Project Chimps sanctuary in Morgantown, GA. Data were collected during two visits, one scheduled and one unscheduled. The findings are provided here in detailed form to the sanctuary administration in accordance with the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A public-facing summary of these findings will be released in November 2020, also in accordance to the MOU.

Chimpanzees are a very well studied species and as such, much is known about the factors that potentially influence chimpanzee welfare. Relying on these research findings, the assessment was conducted under three primary categories measuring (a) the social lives of the chimpanzees; (b) the physical spaces in which they lived; and (c) the management programs that define their daily lives.

The assessment of the chimpanzees' social lives was that it was excellent. All the chimpanzees lived in large and dynamic social groups and there was very little evidence of a lack of cohesion or stability. Point sample indicators of individual wellbeing were largely positive.

The assessment of the chimpanzees' physical living spaces was very good. The outdoor yards are exceptional in their size and complexity, though the positive impact of these spaces was somewhat diminished by the relative lack of access to the chimpanzees who share the yard with other groups. Several of the indoor spaces also were rated very highly, especially those labeled as Chateau A and B. Other spaces were not as complex and enriching. The mixed space's "jungle" were largely assessed as effective in meeting the needs of the chimpanzees though additional substrate considerations could be made.

Programmaticaly, there is room for improvement at the sanctuary. Some issues are not unique to Project Chimps, such as low veterinary and staff experience and a lack of behavioral monitoring programs, but these deserve attention and refinement to improve care here and across the community. Other areas seem to be performing quite well such as emergency protocols/drills and introduction procedures. Overall, the sanctuary may find that great advancement can be made through further collaboration with other like-minded organizations including both zoos and sanctuaries to determine how to advance their programs to meet or exceed best practices.

5

## Project Chimps' Response

we can share best practices and learn from each other.

Our highest score was in the social structure of the groups we have formed thus far at Project Chimps. Our team has completed 6 rounds of group introductions, which have resulted in stable and thriving chimp families. This is a fundamental part of our strategic plan and focuses on one of the most important chimpanzee

Our current remodeled limited use the heights which was were able to expect to be always lead live within always been use daily, a period, when social stability process of increase the

**Instead of sharing the results of Dr. Steve Ross' sanctuary assessment, Project Chimps obscured his report and defended itself in text that can be read.**

Our lower score in "programs" makes us eager to continue to build our capacities in these areas. We are also sure that the way we have conducted some of our programs to date has helped us thrive with respect to important goals for us, such as the development of important social and family structure that the report specifically identifies as excellent. We look forward to increased collaboration with peers, including to address some of the challenges that Dr. Ross points out aren't unique to Project Chimps, but are experienced throughout similar facilities.

Despite the fact that Project Chimps received a D on its welfare management programs at Project Chimps, HSUS uses Dr. Steve Ross' assessment of the sanctuary to defend against allegations of poor animal welfare conditions. Project Chimps blurred the report so that people who see it will read its reaction instead of the report itself.

In July, 2021, HSUS CEO Kitty Block publicly acknowledged the need for additional yards at Project Chimps, but she did not specify when HSUS would create them. In a response to advocates who contacted her about the issue, Block blamed "COVID" and "weather" for the delay, despite the fact that the chimpanzees have been living in these conditions since 2016.

**From:** Kitty Block

**Sent:** Saturday, July 03, 2021 11:28 AM

**To:**

**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Help The Chimps, Steven White

The HSUS has clearly communicated that we agree with Project Chimps' longstanding plan to build out its facilities and staff to support more time in outdoor habitat space for all the chimps at the sanctuary, and that we'll be directing our future financial support of the sanctuary toward those priority needs. We hope that as the previous challenges of weather and COVID wane, better circumstances will allow Project Chimps to begin build-out efforts in the near future.

HSUS CEO Kitty Block's response to advocates calling on her to create additional yards at Project Chimps so that the 82 chimpanzees have daily access to the outdoors. She and Susan Atherton, HSUS's board chair who also had a seat on the board of Project Chimps until 2020, have ignored the pleas of whistleblowers and advocacy groups to improve animal welfare at Project Chimps.

## Why is Project Chimps accredited?

According to the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), great apes who live at sanctuaries that it accredits should be “able to enjoy lives that are as close as possible to that of their wild counterparts.” Despite the fact that Project Chimps does not meet this and many other [GFAS standards](#), GFAS continues to accredit the HSUS sanctuary. HSUS, in turn, uses this accreditation to dismiss criticism and discredit those advocating for better conditions. Neither GFAS nor HSUS has disclosed, however, the conflicts of interest between the organizations — GFAS is comprised of people affiliated with HSUS; is partially funded by HSUS; and has administrative ties to HSUS. In fact, the GFAS domain name is managed by HSUS.

**WHOIS search results**

Domain Name: **SANCTUARYFEDERATION.ORG**  
Registry Domain ID: D138946723-LROR  
Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.enom.com  
Registrar URL: <http://www.enom.com>  
Updated Date: 2021-01-07T08:41:16Z  
Creation Date: 2007-02-05T16:07:53Z  
Registry Expiry Date: 2022-02-05T16:07:53Z  
Registrar Registration Expiration Date:  
Registrar: eNom, Inc.  
Registrar IANA ID: 48  
Registrar Abuse Contact Email: [abuse@enom.com](mailto:abuse@enom.com)  
Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +1.4252982646  
Reseller:  
Domain Status: clientTransferProhibited <https://icann.org/epp/#clientTrar>  
Registrant Organization: **The Humane Society of the United States**

**Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries**

**GLOBAL FEDERATION OF ANIMAL SANCTUARIES**

**ACCREDITED**

**THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 FOUNDATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORTERS !**

- Acton Family Giving
- Albert Schweitzer Animal Welfare Fund
- American Anti-Vivisection Society
- Anonymous Giving
- Arcus Foundation
- Arnall Family Foundation
- ASPCA
- Humane Society of the United States**
- Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust
- Maria Norbury Foundation
- Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
- Tigers in America

Advocates assert that GFAS cannot objectively assess Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) sanctuaries if HSUS funds GFAS, manages its domain and shares staff members and board directors, GFAS was founded in 2007 by four individuals, two of whom worked for HSUS. Mike Markarian was HSUS’s Chief Operating Officer, and Adam Roberts was the treasurer of HSUS’s political action committee. From 2008 to 2015, Roberts was the President of Board of GFAS, and Markarian was the Vice President. From 2016 to 2019, Roberts was the Secretary. In 2019, he became the Board president again. While 2020 tax documents are not yet public, the GFAS website lists both Roberts and Markarian as board members today. In fact, 40% of GFAS’s current board is comprised of executives who work – or worked – for HSUS.

(1) <u>ADAM M ROBERTS</u>	HSUS
PRESIDENT	
(2) <u>MIKE MARKARIAN</u>	HSUS
VICE PRESIDENT	
(3) <u>KIM HADDAD</u>	
TREASURER	
(4) <u>IAN ROBINSON</u>	
SECRETARY	
(5) <u>PETER BENDER</u>	HSUS
DIRECTOR	
(6) <u>SUE LEARY</u>	
DIRECTOR	
(7) <u>ALLAN KORNBORG</u>	
DIRECTOR	
(8) <u>PATTY FINCH</u>	HSUS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	

**GFAS's board has  
always been  
comprised of  
individuals who work  
or worked for HSUS,  
so how can GFAS  
make unbiased  
assessments of  
HSUS sanctuaries?**

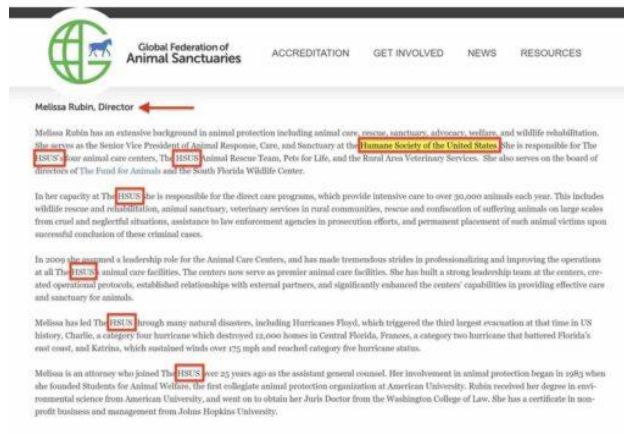
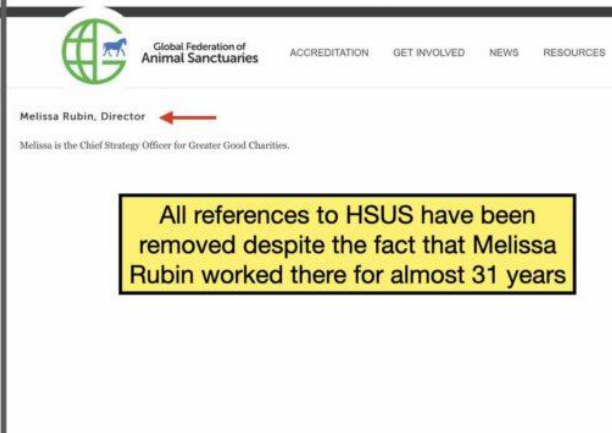
Since GFAS was incorporated in 2007, its Board of Directors has been comprised in large part by current and former HSUS leaders. Given that GFAS is charged with inspecting HSUS sanctuaries, HSUS's representation on GFAS's board represents a conflict of interest.

In 2008, a former Executive Director of a division of HSUS (the National Association for Humane and Environmental Education) became the Executive Director of GFAS. This former HSUS executive, Patty Finch, held the top staff position at GFAS from 2008 to 2013.

GFAS and HSUS have attempted to erase some of their connections in order to minimize the appearance of a conflict of interest and to help GFAS maintain a veneer of independence. For instance, the biography of Adam Roberts on GFAS's website omits his work for HSUS, and the biography of GFAS board member Melissa Rubin omits her 31 years of employment at HSUS. In fact, it only lists a job that she has held for nine months.



## Melissa Rubin's GFAS Bio

2020	2021
	

All references to HSUS have been removed despite the fact that Melissa Rubin worked there for almost 31 years

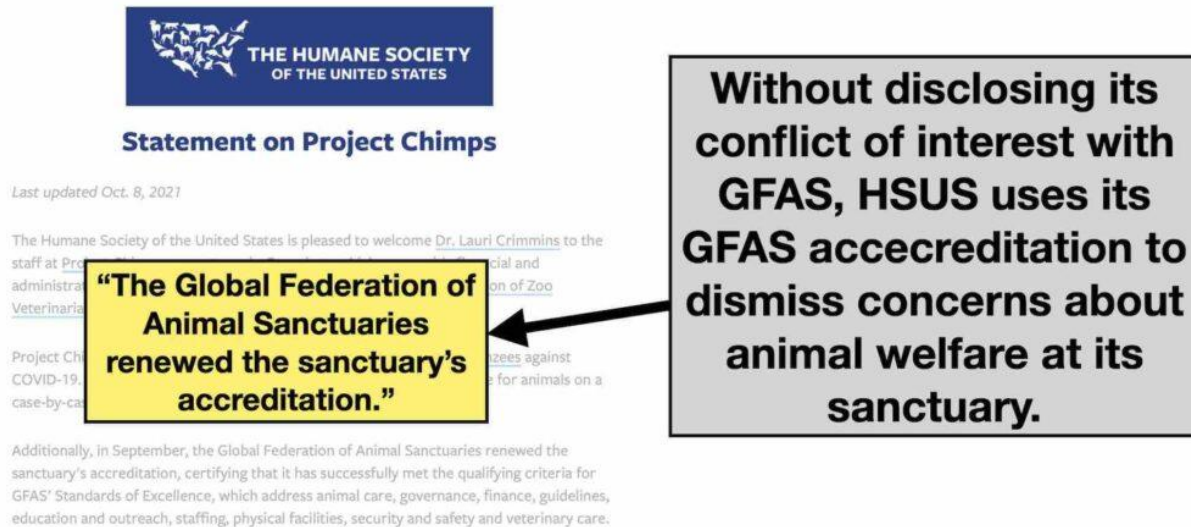
Melissa Rubin's biography on the GFAS website omits her almost 31 years of employment at HSUS. This removal of her HSUS career minimizes the appearance of the conflict of interest between GFAS and HSUS.

Following are examples of other GFAS board members and executives who have – or had – close ties to HSUS:

- GFAS board member Nicole Paquette is Chief Programs and Policy Officer for HSUS. (Paquette also had a seat on the board of Project Chimps until 2020.)
- GFAS executive Grettel Delgadillo is a Program Coordinator for HSI, a division of HSUS.
- GFAS executive Kristin Leppert was formerly employed by HSUS. (In 2020, Leppert inspected Project Chimps on behalf of GFAS)
- Former HSUS board member Peter Bender served on the board of GFAS from its inception until 2020.

These financial, staffing and administrative conflicts of interest between GFAS and HSUS compromise GFAS's ability to make unbiased assessments of an HSUS sanctuary. In order to remain credible and avoid diminishing the value of its accreditation, GFAS should publicly disclose its conflicts of interest with HSUS and recuse itself from inspecting HSUS sanctuaries.





**THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES**

**Statement on Project Chimps**

Last updated Oct. 8, 2021

The Humane Society of the United States is pleased to welcome Dr. Lauri Crimmins to the staff at Project Chimps. Dr. Crimmins is a veterinarian and a member of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians.

**"The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries renewed the sanctuary's accreditation."**

Project Chimps is a sanctuary for chimpanzees. We are committed to providing the best possible care for the chimpanzees against COVID-19. We are also committed to providing the best possible care for animals on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, in September, the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries renewed the sanctuary's accreditation, certifying that it has successfully met the qualifying criteria for GFAS' Standards of Excellence, which address animal care, governance, finance, guidelines, education and outreach, staffing, physical facilities, security and safety and veterinary care.

**Without disclosing its conflict of interest with GFAS, HSUS uses its GFAS accreditation to dismiss concerns about animal welfare at its sanctuary.**

In public statements using its GFAS accreditation to dismiss concerns about animal welfare at its sanctuary, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) doesn't disclose its conflicts of interest with GFAS.

In April 2021, TheirTurn published a [story describing in detail the conflict of interest](#) between HSUS and GFAS.

In recent years, GFAS suspended its accreditation from two other primate sanctuaries that did not meet its standards, Chimps Inc and Jungle Friends. Advocates believe it would have suspended the accreditation of Project Chimps too if it didn't have a conflict of interest with HSUS.

### What is HSUS's Obligation to the Chimps?

When HSUS took control of the board of Project Chimps in 2015, it made a commitment to fulfill the sanctuary's mission to provide humane retirement to the 220 chimpanzees at NIRC. As part of that commitment, HSUS should have built enough housing structures to accommodate all of the NIRC chimpanzees and created enough habitat space to enable them to have daily access to the outdoors. By renegeing on its commitment and by distancing itself from Project Chimps, HSUS has betrayed the chimpanzees, its fiduciary duties and its obligations to its affiliate sanctuary.

## The 100 Largest U.S. Charities

Forbes The 100 Largest U.S. Charities 2020 RANKING			
Rank	Name	Private Support	Total Revenue
#78	 Humane Society of the United States	\$191 M	\$255 M

As the 78th most wealthy charity in the United States, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has the resources to expand its Project Chimps sanctuary to humanely accommodate the 82 chimps who are already there and the approximately 110 chimps waiting to be rescued from NIRC.

Save The Chimps, a sanctuary in Florida that has approximately 230 chimpanzees, is backed by The Arcus Foundation. Similarly, Chimp Haven, a sanctuary in Louisiana with more than 300 chimpanzees, receives 75% of its chimp care funding from the NIH. In order to rescue the approximately 110 chimpanzees who remain at NIRC and to humanely accommodate the 82 chimpanzees who are already at the sanctuary, Project Chimps also needs financial backing. HSUS made a commitment to do so. And it has the resources. Over the past several years, HSUS has raised millions of dollars off of the plight of captive chimpanzees and, according to an inside source, it recently received a \$100 million estate gift from a donor who had an affinity for chimpanzees.

Instead of misleading the public about conditions at Project Chimps, attempting to extricate itself of its obligations and making excuses for it hasn't expanded Project Chimps, HSUS must use a fraction of its substantial wealth to break ground on new habitats and transform the 236 acre forested property into a true sanctuary that meets and exceeds the standards of other North American chimpanzee sanctuaries provide. The chimpanzees have already waited far too long for a safe, natural and enriched life.



In 2020 and 2021, animal rights activists with Progress for Science staged multiple protests at the Los Angeles home of HSUS board member Steven White. White is no longer listed as a board member, but



activists argue that his decision to step down or remove his name from the list did nothing to help the chimpanzees who he neglected while he had a seat.

People around the world have been frustrated about the pandemic “lockdowns” despite the fact that most have been able to enjoy the outdoors and the comforts of home. If we feel like our freedoms have been compromised, then imagine the stress experienced by the chimpanzees who have spent up to five years largely confined in concrete rooms at Project Chimps and up to several decades in a laboratory before that.



After Project Chimps sued the whistleblowers who exposed substandard living conditions, poor veterinary care animal other forms of neglect at the sanctuary, animal rights activists and national animal rights groups, including PETA and the Nonhuman Rights Project, began calling on HSUS to improve its facility.

\*If you know of any information in this report or previous or future articles on this topic to be inaccurate, please contact us with documentation.