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Smile When You Say Environment, Podner

Rancher Jim Chilton's encouraging courtroom victory over the Center for Biological Diversity seems to be saying that the public is becoming fed up with the scurrilous propaganda and self-serving lawsuits by these environmentalist litigation mills, which cause more damage to public lands than his cows ever could by preventing proper maintenance and utilization of them ("[Rancher Turns the Table: Environmental Group Loses Lawsuit Filed by Cattleman](#)," Marketplace, Aug. 19). Perhaps it will also send another message: What lies at the root of all this unnecessary cost, litigation and damage is that the federal government simply owns too much land just for the sake of owning land.

Donald R. Spalding

Whitefield, N.H.

The Center for Biological Diversity is one of the most effective conservation groups in the country with a rapidly growing national membership of 15,000. We use science, activism and the law to fight for Americans who want to protect endangered species from irresponsible developers, timber and mining companies, ranchers and other special interests. We've been successful in protecting hundreds of endangered species and their habitats. We hope future generations will benefit because we've helped prevent the extinction of fish, wildlife and plants.

We're disappointed in our first-round loss to the Chilton Cattle Co.'s defamation suit. We were simply using our First Amendment rights to petition the federal government. Unfortunately, this verdict is a threat to all of those concerned about nature and their First Amendment rights. We are appealing the case.

Michael Finkelstein

Executive Director

Center for Biological Diversity

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