

THE ROAD TO HERE

An occasional series telling the stories of Greenpeacers and what brought them to the movement

By T. (Tom) Cashman Ávila-Beck

When you leave a legacy with Greenpeace, you're helping to build a future where ancient forests are protected and a dependence on fossil fuels is a thing of the past. You're helping to create a greener, more peaceful tomorrow.

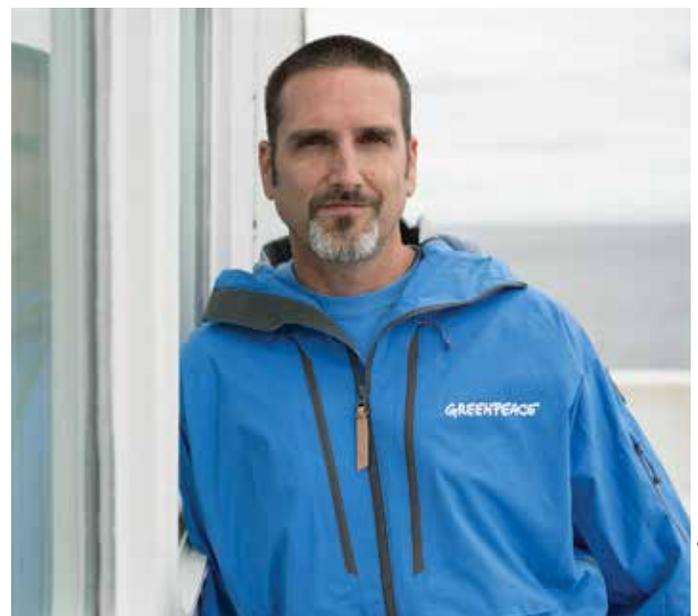
You're also empowering people to do the work they love to do, the work they were called to do in order to protect this planet we all share.

One of those people is John Hocevar, Greenpeace USA's Ocean Campaign Director. John has explored a previously unknown reef system at the mouth of the Amazon and has dived deep into the Bering Sea Canyons to bring greater understanding to just how much we don't yet know about our oceans and the thriving environments deep below the surface.

His latest voyage, in Antarctic waters, was designed to draw the attention of world leaders ahead of their gathering for the March 2022 United Nations Intergovernmental Conference (IGC4). Greenpeace supporters are some of the more than 5 million people globally who are calling for a Global Oceans Treaty that protects 30 percent of our world's oceans by 2030.

But how does someone, like John, go from being a kid in Connecticut to piloting a submersible in some of the wildest waters in the world? We asked him to share his story.

I grew up in a small town about 20 miles east of Hartford, Connecticut, closer to cows than a place where you could buy milk. Our first family outing to the ocean was to Rocky Neck State Park, on the Long Island Sound, when I was about five. My folks were still unpacking the car when they realized I'd taken



© Christian Aslund / Greenpeace

*John Hocevar,
Greenpeace USA's Ocean Campaign Director*

off. It was low tide, and even though I couldn't swim yet I was determinedly walking out into the sea.

Around the same time, I became obsessed with a set of old 78 RPM records called Bozo Under the Sea. They came with a picture book filled with illustrations of things like nurse sharks, sawfish, whales, and electric eels. The whole thing really captured my imagination. Is all this crazy stuff really down there?

A bit later, I watched a lot of Jacques Cousteau, and the Bozo cartoons came to life. All that crazy stuff IS really down there! But it wasn't until I was about 14, when I stumbled onto some of my Uncle Don's old books, that I started to understand that the ocean might need my help. So, I got certified to SCUBA dive.

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The Road to Here (cont.)

My little high school had a fantastic oceanography class, which brought us out on the Sound and even to visit a research center in Bermuda. I went to UCONN and studied marine science with Dick Cooper, who somehow arranged to let me dive in a submarine called the Delta. After that, it felt like my future was set. I was going to be a marine biologist so I could spend all my time exploring the ocean. I went to grad school at Nova, down

in southeast Florida, and loved almost every minute of it.

While I was at Nova, I started getting the feeling that the problem was not usually that we didn't know enough to do the right thing, but that we just kept choosing not to do it. You don't need a study to demonstrate that dynamite fishing or bottom trawling is a bad idea, you just have to stop doing it. I still believed that science was important, but decided that for me, anyway, I wanted to use my scientific background to fight to protect the ocean. Instead of academia, I found my way to Greenpeace.

When you leave a legacy with Greenpeace, you're helping to write



Marizilda Cruppe / Greenpeace

Dr. Susanne Lockhart (left), Antarctic biologist, and John Hocevar (right), marine biologist, Greenpeace USA's Oceans Campaigns Director and submersible pilot prepare to dive off Half Moon Island in Antarctica.

Tell us your story

We invite you to tell us *in your own words* how you care about our environment, what made you get involved in caring for the planet, or why you have chosen Greenpeace as a beneficiary in your estate plans. Please write to YourStory.us@Greenpeace.org for more information. Please write "Tell Us Your Story" in the subject line.

the future of the planet, and the future of inspired, talented people whose passion is for this planet and whose gifts are making a difference. Whose story will you help write? What tomorrow will you help us create?

T. (Tom) Cashman Ávila-Beck is a Development Special Projects Manager at Greenpeace.

Fact or Fiction: Ways to Support our Planet

There are so many ways to support Greenpeace and planet Earth — but that's often paired with confusion around certain forms of giving. So, let's play a quick game of fact or fiction:

IRA gifts are powerful ways to support Greenpeace, and my finances.

Fact! If you're 70.5 or older, IRA gifts support a healthier planet and are excluded from your annual gross income — meaning they reduce your future tax burden. They can also help fulfill a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for 2022 if you're required to take one.

Donating stock is an increasingly popular way to support Greenpeace.

Fact! Many Greenpeace supporters are supporting the people, planet, and species they love by donating their appreciated assets. By donating stocks rather than selling them, you avoid paying capital gains tax while supporting a cause that you love.

These tax-wise gifts are difficult to make.

Fiction! Greenpeace has two intuitive online resources to help you learn more and complete your IRA or stock gift in less than 10 minutes. Visit <https://bit.ly/3uGogxl> to donate stocks and visit <https://bit.ly/3sfbSkQ> to create your IRA gift.

Gift Planning News for 2022

This year may well see legislation passed that could bring substantial tax law and other changes; however, due to gridlock in Congress, no major tax legislation was passed before year-end as was anticipated.

Before the close of 2021, the IRS released new tax tables and other figures that are indexed for inflation for use in 2022. These include new federal income tax rate tables and increases in the following: the standard deduction, the annual exclusion for gifts, the unified credit against estate and gift tax amounts and insubstantial benefits for charitable gifts.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 repealed or limited many deductions, but the charitable deduction escaped virtually unscathed. In fact, it was enhanced through an increased allowance for cash gifts that can be claimed each year (up to 60% of adjusted gross income). Gifts above that amount may be carried forward up to five years.

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019 (SECURE Act) made several changes that may serve to encourage charitable gifts from retirement plans after first providing for your needs and those of your loved ones.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, also included important sections to benefit the charitable sector. This included a limited allowance for an above-the-line charitable deduction for cash gifts of up to \$300. It also increased the overall AGI limitation for charitable cash contributions from 60% to 100%.

Though every person's tax situation is different, most



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A jaguar rests under the shade in the Pantanal wetlands, in the midwest of Brazil. The recurrent lack of rainfall, and the total absence of environmental protection policies, started an unprecedented crisis.

tax payers will benefit from the newly expanded standard deduction or may continue to claim itemized deductions for their charitable gifts.

Charitable Giving Strategies to Consider

Qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from IRAs are advantageous for eligible individuals. Although no charitable deduction is available, the income tax that is normally owed on withdrawals is avoided.

Making gifts of *appreciated assets*, such as stocks, allows you to avoid the capital gains tax that would be due if the assets were sold, even if you use the standard deduction.

Those with *donor advised funds* can direct gifts to public charities. Contributing appreciated securities to a donor advised fund provides added tax savings.

Provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal, accounting, or other professional advice.

Bequest Information

Greenpeace Fund, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization. Contributions to Greenpeace Fund are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed under tax laws.

Name and Address: Greenpeace Fund, Inc.
702 H Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20001

Federal Tax ID: 95-3313195

For questions or more information about remembering Greenpeace in your Will, please contact *Rogelio Ocampo* at 202-319-2413 or rocampo@greenpeace.org. You may also visit our website at greenpeacefund.org.

GREENPEACE FUND

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GREENLEGACY

Greenpeace's Biannual Newsletter

A disaster for the future of biodiversity is forecasted at Lake Neusiedl, which straddles the Austrian–Hungarian border. Numerous protected and already endangered species call Lake Neusiedl their home, like these horses.



Recognized by Charity Navigator as having demonstrated excellent accountability and transparency.



Awarded “Best in America Seal” by Independent Charities of America. Of the one million charities operating in the USA, less than two thousand have been awarded this prestigious seal.