Dear Friend:

Greetings and very best wishes for this Season!

It has indeed been an honor to be joined with people like you to make the work of the Property Rights Foundation of America, Inc., possible for nearly twenty years!

In anticipation of PRFA's twentieth anniversary early next year, let's take a quick look at what we’ve stood for and accomplished together to preserve private property rights and private property ownership in rural and urban communities.

As you look at our attached Twenty-Year List, which includes our top areas of focus, please keep in mind these points:

Your involvement in PRFA involves two facets that are both absolutely necessary:

- At the primary level is the background information and understanding based on the analysis of sources such as environmental journals, court decisions, and legislative records. This background knowledge exposes a sort of reverse Constitution, creating the new framework to undermine our rights.

- At the next level is the information about current events that fit into the patterns that environmentalists and power-hungry people in government have created to implement their goals. These events are only possible because of the undermining of the legal framework that protects our fundamental rights.

Our focus on both of these aspects is geared to make our work together unique and especially effective.

Here’s an example of how the “Reverse Constitution” pans out in harsh regulation of human behavior and how we’ve been exposing both the “Reverse Constitution” and laying bare the ugliness of the regulatory morass it facilitates:

Twenty years ago, we explored the purpose of national heritage areas, and saw their capacity to accomplish far more than their advocates boasted about publicly:

The structure of national heritage areas was precisely the same as that for greenways, which, in the environmental preservationist publications such as the seminal book on the subject, funded by the Conservation Fund, were envisioned to be the “infrastructure” of a “framework” to restore the corrupted landscape of America.

About six years ago, we delved into specifics, looking at Olana, the mansion of Hudson River School artist Frederic E. Church that overlooks the Hudson Valley, and its significance as a means to stop the construction of facilities in its “viewshed” such as telecommunications towers that meet the basic needs of modern society.

At that time, we were writing in the context of the Hudson Valley Greenway and its designation as the Hudson River National Heritage Area, which formed an important part of the backdrop empowering the environmentalists in their gentrification and preservation goals.
This illustrates how, when you’ve read our publications over these years, you have obtained an education about the causes and ramifications of environmentalist and other over-zealous, excessive government visions.

With this letter you will find an outline of PRFA’s top ten key areas of focus, a twenty-year list that begins with “Environmental Regulation,” and includes such topics as “Preserving Communities and Culture” and “Biosphere Reserves.” PRFA pioneered many of these issues.

Think further of the trap created by the “Reverse Constitution”: how difficult it is to fight wetlands restrictions when facing this embellishment of the Clean Water Act, or to resist regulation of micro-pollutants when the peculiar requirement for “best available technology” was written into that inscrutable law forty years ago, or to fight crooked zoning officials when their interests are concealed and the enforcement of neglected rules hits an unwary property owner.

Under the “Reverse Constitution,” instead of the guarantee of liberty in the U. S. Constitution, people are encircled by layers of rules and regulations over a great part of their property and their very lives. Bound like Gulliver with a zillion Lilliputian threads, the people unexpectedly find themselves struggling for their just liberty. Under the complexity of the “Reverse Constitution,” there may be no escape.

After attending this year’s conference, a man wrote me a note, remarking about how people in this country do not realize that property rights are disappearing. “Combine all this year’s speakers and the diversity of the crises they represent, then connect all the dots, it’s beyond astonishing,” he wrote.

Two examples of the shocking, heartrending stories: Heidi Peterson told how she returned from a trip and found a “human rights” activist “homesteading” in her house in Detroit. The police would not arrest the invader for trespass. Tom Miller told the story of his kind friend Jerry, working as hard as humanly possible to operate his family’s century-old, low production oil wells in Pennsylvania, but he could not meet the barrage of worthless anti-pollution interpretations. Worn down, he simply died. Yet, perhaps most astounding of all was the brilliant closing address by Roger Pilon, J. D., Ph. D., of Cato Institute, describing the steady, steep erosion of property rights that began with the Progressive Era.

With PRFA’s annual national conferences, and the many other PRFA programs made possible by the support of generous people like you, we have carried out this dual educational function, nor hesitating to point to the threats posed by perhaps idealistic, supposedly harmless, broad schemes and legislation, and also by the insidious specifics, where someone is made an example and it becomes ever more difficult for anyone else to dare stand up.

You are needed more than ever. Our sacred, real Constitution is still enshrined as the supreme law of the land. It is our part to stand in the way of the new system of infringements, to stop them from ripping the heart out of our beloved Constitution. Please give as generously as you can to the Property Rights Foundation of America.

With very best wishes for this Season and the New Year,

Carol W. LaGrasse
President

A copy of the latest annual financial report of the Property Rights Foundation of America, Inc., may be obtained from the organization or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10271.