

To: Rachael Bale, Editor of National Geographic's Wildlife Watch
From: Ali Crumpacker, Executive Director
Date: July 9, 2020
Re: Response to the NatGeo article about Project Chimps



To the Editor:

I am writing to respond to Rachel Fobar's article "Sanctuary for retired lab chimps embroiled in the dispute over quality of care" posted on July 8, 2020.

As stated in the article, we cooperated fully and invited Ms. Fobar to the facility twice as our goal was, and remains, full transparency. I introduced Ms. Fobar to a significant number of current personnel from a variety of backgrounds who work with the chimps in our care every day, many of whom have for years. She took extensive time to interview over 13 Project Chimps representatives made up of current staff, volunteers, and supporters. For some reason, she chose not to include any of the statements of these individuals who she interviewed to provide their *positive* opinions of our facilities, programs, and care of the chimps. These omissions are very disappointing, since these individuals strongly disagree with the false statements and opinions expressed by the people that she decided to quote throughout the article. Including their statements would have made for a much fairer and more balanced piece of journalism.

Instead, Ms. Fobar focused on statements primarily from former employees who resigned or were terminated for cause and from one particular former employee who worked with our program for a mere three months and had no prior primate experience.

Our dedication to our vision to ensure all chimpanzees will thrive and experience opportunities to make their own decisions on how they live, up until the day they sunset, has not wavered. We have volunteered to be the very first facility for a full, independent, welfare assessment through Project ChimpCARE with Dr. Steve Ross, the Director of the Lester E. Fisher Center for the Study and Conservation of Apes. Ms. Fobar was aware of this forthcoming program, and despite including parts of her interview with Dr. Ross, she failed to mention this independent assessment in its entirety.

I cannot fully express my disappointment in National Geographic for producing this biased story. Below are several of those who were interviewed, and then ignored by Ms. Fobar, who have also signed on to this statement.

Sincerely,

Ali Crumpacker
Executive Director, Project Chimps

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