A lot of environmentalists are uncomfortable about Cass Sunstein's appointment as "regulatory czar" at OMB. Reasonable people may differ about the validity of those concerns. But now he's been attacked from another direction — conservatives eager to paint him as an animal-rights fanatic who wants to ban hunting. For instance,

> For one particularly colorful attack, we turn your attention to a speech from the National Rifle Association's fiery Wayne LaPierre at the annual meeting of the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) conference on Feb. 27, 2009. LaPierre opened with a zinger: "Sunstein is a radical animal rights extremist who makes PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) look like cheerleaders with pooper-scoopers." How extreme? LaPierre said Sunstein wants to ban hunting. And to back up the claim, LaPierre played a video snippet of Sunstein saying just that during a speech at Harvard in 2007. In it, Sunstein says, "We ought to ban hunting, I suggest, if there isn't a purpose other than sport and fun. That should be against the law. It's time now." LaPierre also claims Sunstein is "a man who wants to give legal standing to animals so they can sue you for eating meat."
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> In addition, libertarians think he's too pro-regulation. For example, some guy who calls himself "the rational capitalist" says: As a proponent of "choice architecture", Mr. Sunstein's views on the role of government are completely antithetical to the principle of individual rights upon which this nation was founded. For instance, Mr. Sunstein's support for a "fairness doctrine" on the internet and "civility checks" on emails are but two ominous examples of his support for unlimited and arbitary government power over the lives of individuals.

All of this is a tribute to the general zaniness of American politics. But it should also be a reminder that thinkers — particularly at Sunstein's level — are almost always more complex and nuanced than we often find it convenient to believe.