

We could continue to go merrily on our way in the hopes that this is all a bad dream which will go away, and that because we are right we will ultimately win without any special effort. However, we would be naive indeed if we believed that. We are a minority, we should recognize that fact and act accordingly. This is firmly impressed on our minds when we realize that 6 major anti-hunting groups (most, incidentally, now opposing the 1975-76 waterfowl seasons), in 1973 raised \$14,400,000. More than the entire combined budgets of the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the National Rifle Association and the Wildlife Management Institute during that year. More significant, between 1968 and 1973 those same 6 groups enjoyed a growth rate, in dollar terms, of over 240 percent. During the same period, hunting license sales increased by only 1 to 3 percent per year.

One of our major challenges as a group is to maintain our credibility and to make ourselves heard and felt through this organization and the International Association. At the risk of offending anybody left who is not already offended, I believe we could improve in this.

Too often during past years, I have observed in the Flyway Councils, mourning dove meetings, and elsewhere, frequent conflicts among ourselves competing for the same resources. Too often we have used these organizations to "make a record for the folks back home" and to further local interests. We can no longer afford such luxuries. We have also too often concerned ourselves with day-to-day incidentals, and have failed to deal with mounting issues. Too often, we don't recognize the difference between them.

Too many times we and our constituents have become involved in conflicts on what turn out to be incidentals; the barn door being left wide open, and too late realize the horse has been stolen by those who laugh at our having been diverted by an incident while the issue is quietly lost.

In summary, it is clear that the changes in our chosen field and in society as a whole have been truly substantial in recent years. It is equally clear that we will need to change with the times or suffer the consequences.

This organization, through the years, has been one of the most viable and productive of all. We are clearly the leaders in Cooperative projects, as our record will show. I think our challenge then is to bring that cooperative spirit to bear in addressing the many issues facing us.

THE BICENTENNIAL AND THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

by

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If we condense the entire history of man on earth to a twelve-month year, the Declaration of Independence would have been signed on the 29th of December. Mechanized history of humanity took place in the last two days of the year. When we think about what has been done to this country in that 48-hour period on the scale of time, we should also think about future generations which will have to clean up after us.

Some 25 years ago Fairfield Osborne called the United States "the country of the great illusion." He said: "the story of our nation in the last century regards the use of forests, grasslands, wildlife and water sources is the most violent and most destructive of any written in the long history of civilization. It is the story of human energy unthinking and uncontrolled."

Have we really been such lousy stewards of the land? Is that crack in the liberty bell somehow symbolic of our influence on the American landscape?

No question about it. Our ancestors *did* cut over most of the giant forests from the East Coast to the Mississippi Valley and changed the character of the land.

They *did* cultivate the cleared land to the detriment of the original habitats and the wildlife.

Our ancestors *did* carve up the native prairies and graze their herds all the way to the Rockies, pushing plains dwellers like the elk up the mountainsides and the prairie chicken into smaller and smaller areas. In their rush to conquer the land our ancestors *did* eliminate species of flora and fauna. But this isn't a time for breast beating. As we head for our 200th birthday, it's a time for reflection and a common sense approach to the future.

We can understand why the sawmill operator dumped the sawdust into the stream that powered his mill. There was lots of water and it didn't bother anybody downstream. There probably wasn't anybody downstream.

It worked and there was nobody around saying "stop it. Look at all the damage you're doing."

The frontier mentality, the role of conqueror of the wilderness was the only role—until about a hundred years ago.

Nobody knows exactly when conservation as we think of it really got underway—when the nation seriously considered living in harmony with the land rather than in spite of it.—When the words "Wise use" were first spoken.

The word "conservation" itself came into common use only about 1900, but the practice of it began some years earlier. In 1864, Congress decided to begin putting aside our greatest natural wonders for the people to enjoy. The Yosemite Valley and Yellowstone became our first National Parks.

After the Civil War, the future of *wildlife* became important, in dramatic fashion. Even though someone may be out there salivating over the opportunity to outgore the "Jaws" of television news—The Guns of Autumn—I'm going to mention the Buffalo, the prairie chicken and the passenger pigeon. Advancing civilization, loss of habitat and the market hunter combined to obliterate one species and threaten the other two. The sport hunter and wildlife manager helped end those abuses. "wise use" may have first been heard then.

The citizen conservation movement began about the same time—the 1880's. George Bird Grinnel, editor of the famous outdoor magazine *Forest and Stream Weekly*, was an authority on the buffalo and its decline.

In the pages of *Forest and Stream* he campaigned for sound game laws and urged restraint on his readers when they were in the field.

In 1886 Grinnell wrote an editorial suggesting an "Audubon Society" to protect wild birds. Plumage hunting in the Everglades was a hot item. The idea took root and within two years the Audubon Society boasted 50,000 members.

The states were increasingly involved in conservation and in 1896 a young Connecticut law regulating the shipment of game was tested by the Supreme Court. In its landmark decision on a case involving "shipment of certain woodcock, ruffed grouse and quail" by a Mr. Geer, the court ruled that game was the property of the State.

The country was settling down, towns boiled up everywhere and the countryside, forests and clean streams were becoming more distant to the swelling numbers of city folk. They began banding together to start saving the land and its wildlife—for themselves and from the exploiters.

The citizen conservation movement really started to roll in the 1920's. The Izaak Walton League exploded on the national scene with a series of accomplishments that brought tens of thousands into the organization. The Establishment of the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge, the saving of the great Jackson's Hole Elk Herd and The Removal of the Black Bass from interstate commerce were just a few of the League's achievements in the 20's.

I think one story best illustrates the fervor of the members of those years and offers an important lesson to everyone of us. It took place in the winter of 1926.

Pushed into the high country by the ranches blanketing the floor of Jackson Hole, the elk either joined the cattle when the heavy snows came or starved. But there wasn't always enough in the Snake River breadline and the elk really suffered. Thousands died in the winter of 1911-12 and again in 1923. The herd was in serious trouble.

The Ikes, flush with victory on the Upper Mississippi opened a drive to save the great herd from starvation. Pictures of dead and dying elk, sprawled in the snow appeared in *Outdoor America*, combined with the impassioned pleas of such writers and League leaders as Zane Grey, Harold Bell Wright, Gene Stratton Porter, El Comancho and Dr. James Henshall, who wrote the book of the Black Bass and served as our "pollution editor" in those early days.

In just 120 days, the League's Elk Fund collected \$35,000 in nickles, dimes and pennies from shocked and concerned citizens.

Cliff Hallowell, an Iowa Ike, went West and spent several weeks buying enough land to put together the 2000 acre Izaak Walton League Elk Refuge. That land today is the heart of the 25,000 acre National Elk Refuge at Jackson, Wyoming.

But there was another man in the story and he provides the vital message we need today. His name was Dall De Weese, and he was president of our Royal Gorge Colorado Chapter. De Weese was so turned on to the elk project that he left home, job and family and spent the winter of 1926 in Jackson

Hole riding out each day to count the elk as they entered the Refuge. His dedication didn't stop there. The League's national office asked him to help button down the title to a key 80 acre parcel in the Refuge. De Weese was unstopppable. He treked through that rugged country for weeks until he located the landowner in a jail cell in Driggs, Idaho on Christmas Eve. It was prohibition and the rancher had turned to bootlegging. The law caught up to him just before the League. De Weese locked up the 80 acres and bought another 320 besides.

I don't see many citizen conservationists with the dedication and determination of Dall De Weese anymore.

But maybe that's understandable. People see a headline in the paper that says "EPA sets nation's Water Clean-up cost at \$250 billion."

"What can I do?" They ask. "That's not only too big for me, it's too technical, it's just another drain on my shrinking wallet, it sounds so impossible it's ludicrous, and what the hell is tertiary treatment anyway? Who needs it?"

It's tough being a citizen conservationist today. Land Use planning with all its arms and legs, nuclear power, strip mining, oil shale development, scenic rivers, the anti-hunting paranoia, channelization, solid waste, forest management . . .

How we would all like to have the chance just to save the Jackson Hole herd from starvation. That was really pretty easy.

The job is so complex we are often too ready to let Washington do it. But it can't. Not without the Dall De Weeses and Cliff Hallowells and George Grinnel's out there.

The *people*—the hunters, the fishermen, the homemaker, the bird watchers, the hikers and you and me—all of us have got to get back to the land—get involved in the care of the resource on a personal basis rather than the changing of the channel on the TV set.

We must get our hands into the earth so we can understand how it works.

Aldo Leopold put it much better than I can. What we need is a sense of husbandry, he said in *A Sand County Almanac*. "Husbandry is unknown to the outdoorsman who works for conservation with his vote rather than with his hands. It is realized only when some art of management is applied to land by some person of perception. . . That is to say, its enjoyment is reserved for landholders too poor to buy their sport, and land administrators with a sharp eye and ecological mind."

A lot of you in this room fit Leopold's mold, because by being close to our wild living resources, by working with them you have developed the understanding, the kinship with the land that is the telltale sign of a true conservationist.

But you have a great advantage over the people you serve. Each day they grow further away from the conservation esthetic as you grow closer. Why? Because they aren't in the game. You have *so* lifted their load, their responsibility for the care of the land that they don't know what it's all about. As Leopold said "They look at the world around them but never see it."

Again from *A Sand County Almanac*: "The government which essays to substitute public for private operation of recreational lands is unwittingly giving away to its field officers a large share of what it seeks to offer its citizens. We foresters and game managers might logically pay for, instead of being paid for, our job as husbandmen of wild crops."

Think about that. Get this little book off your library shelf. Better yet buy your own copy if you don't have one and re-read Leopold.

Here are the answers to Irv Drasnin, CBS-TV News and *The Guns of Autumn*.

The majority of Americans are content to let you do the job for them. Are—they—really? Since they are not close to the land, they don't understand you and they don't understand what you're doing. That situation is a perfect culture in which to plant the anti-hunting spore. And as we have all seen, we have some pretty shrewd planters in our midst, and not the kind George Washington had to deal with 200 years ago.

All right, we're bombarded on every side with crises, not enough personnel to handle them, and shrinking budgets. What the heck do we do to get the people back to the land—the first step in getting the public support we all need to do our job.

First off, let's practice what we preach. Read Leopold again and do some personal communing with nature. Plant a wildlife food plot with a scout troop. Help your wife's garden club on a stream clean-up project.

Second, let's analyze our own operation. How much time, how much money—do we allot to hand to hand environmental education—the kind that gets people close to the resource. Increase it.

Third, and this is probably a bigger problem with the citizen conservation movement than it is with most of you—fighting among ourselves. Legitimate criticism and intellectual honesty go hand in

hand, but some of our current debates about wise use of the resource are little more than name calling. I like Dr. Elvis Stahr's description in his foreword to Frank Graham's 1971 book "Man's Dominion, the story of Conservation in America." The Audubon Society President said, "There are bound to be conflicts between the "new conservationists" and the breed whose allegiance is to the older conservation organizations. The fiercest struggles", said Dr. Stahr "have not always broken out between the conserver and the exploiter; there has been a great deal of intramural squabbling and figurative headbreaking within the movement itself."

That gap has got to be closed. Honest communication, sprinkled liberally with humility would help.

If we take these steps: practice what we preach, reevaluate our long range planning, communicate, cooperate, we will see some positive results.

So what is the Izaak Walton League doing about all this? Well we've reached back into our bag of tricks from 50 years ago and re-ignited a campaign to get people into the clean water business. If you haven't heard about it yet, you soon will. In 1925 the League sponsored a program called Adopt a River. It went well for awhile and then disappeared in the evolutionary process that makes most such programs wither and die. A new crisis had come along that was more important. It is the nature of the beast.

There's a difference with our new program, Save Our Streams. We not only plan to keep it around for a long time. It works so darn well we won't be able to kill it. We may have to sell it to get rid of it.

SOS is a stream adoption program just like Adopt a River. People turn in cards to us. We register them and they go about taking care of their favorite stream, pond or lake. It differs from the old model in several key ways:

1. It's attractively packaged;
2. It's taken to the people;
3. We don't let the participants off the hook. We communicate with them to be sure they stick with it on a year 'round basis, and
4. It never gets stale. We're always making changes to give it marketability.

After a three-year test run in Maryland, where Mac King of the State DNR started it, we took SOS on nationally two years ago. In '73 we put it in a handsome kit. In '74 we added a striking poster with the aid of the American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Assn. and this year came the big explosion—the Water Wagon.

Putting Save Our Streams on the road this summer in a motorhome made available to us by Coachmen Industries was like spraying ether in the SOS carburetor. In 1974, we had reached the Izaak Walton League membership and about 5000 other folks. The Water Wagon is now rolling around the country—it is now in Joplin to start its winter tour through the Southwest and Far West—

The Wagon was launched only last June. Dave Whitney, our SOS program director has already been in direct contact with more than 50,000 folks through countless streamside workshops, slide lectures, school assemblies and civic meetings.

Dave actually takes the group down to the stream where they walk the segment proposed for adoption, record its obvious pluses or minus, test the water quality and enjoy a delightful "critter" hunt, where the participants actually get in the water to learn about its wild living resources.

If you want to see people turned on and tuned in to conservation, watch one of Dave's "critter" hunts.

Before he leaves, they agree on a plan of action to see any problems remedied and set up a regular monitoring program.

SOS is a federally-designated bicentennial project and we hope to have 2,000 streams, lakes, ponds or river segments in the program by next 4th of July. That's ambitious, but realistic if it continues to grow at its present pace. There are now more than 125 streams in 16 states and more come in each week. You may have seen articles in *Sports Afield*, *Ducks Unlimited*, *The National Observer* and other media in recent weeks. The program has even gone international with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists starting it in Canada.

In answering their request for materials I told them:

"Of key importance to the success of the program are its concept of *continuing-care* and the consultation with local, state or provincial natural resource agencies whose technical advice and assistance are requisite to any substantial improvement of a stream."

We aren't out to make experts of laymen. You don't need any more instant professionals. We urge people to work only with guidance and approval. If you hear of any in-stream changes resulting from SOS, I want to know about them.

I could talk all day about Save Our Streams but let me just conclude by saying it helps answer the need to get back to the land. We have two more programs in the works to get underway when Save Our Streams is properly funded, running smoothly—and when we are damn sure we are ready for more.

One project deals with wildlife habitat improvement—something our members have been into for many years—and the other will concentrate on our estuaries. All will involve people—actively involve them.

The Izaak Walton League was once the only game in town—in the conservation movement—citizen division. Keep an eye on us we are coming back.

I'm going to let Leopold close for me. He best sums up our conservation priorities as we head for our 200th birthday:

“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”

Harmony only comes with understanding. And you can't understand something unless you know it. Our greatest challenge is to bring about this harmony. We can if we get back to the land and take a lot of folks with us.

A NEW DIMENSION FOR FUNDING CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

by

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Fish and wildlife administrators are facing growing public pressures to broaden existing programs. Many management efforts are under severe challenge. This is a natural expansion of the ground swell of environmental concern that first became apparent about a decade ago. It has gained strength and momentum ever since.

The fact that some calls for change are unrealistic is beside the point. Expansion of fish and wildlife programs is mandated by recent federal and state legislation. And under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, state agencies must expand programs to retain authority over important segments of their fish and nonmigratory wildlife resources.

Reactions of state fish and wildlife administrators have been mixed. Some resent the intrusion of federal authority into spheres of interest and activity that in the past have been exclusively theirs. Others see it as a challenge to broaden their services to the public. But no matter what reaction, the laws are on the books and there is little chance they will be repealed. If anything, they will be tightened further.

Fish and wildlife professionals must realize and accept the public's concern over the future of fish, wildlife, and their habitats. Our profession must acknowledge and respond to this demand or the public will look elsewhere for leadership. Make no mistake on that.

It was largely with a view toward assisting in developing broader programs to meet this public demand that the Wildlife Management Institute accepted, late in 1974, the invitation of the Council on Environmental Quality and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a comprehensive study of funding and programs for nongame species in the United States.

The task was complicated by the imposition of a deadline of only a few weeks and the fact that nongame species in one way or another occupy the attention of hundreds of agencies, organizations, and institutions. Further, their programs, efforts and funding for nongame species are not clearly separated or defined. The conservation officer on patrol, for example, can no more account for his time spent in enforcing nongame species laws than can the officer on the beat say what proportion of his time is spent preventing burglaries or auto theft. Similarly, wildlife habitat created or maintained for game species benefits a broad spectrum of nongame fish and wildlife.

With these hurdles recognized, WMI launched the survey through seven questionnaires designed to ferret out program information for the diverse groups that had to be contacted. One or more of the questionnaires were sent to state conservation organizations, federal agencies, colleges and universities, the Cooperative Extension Service in each state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, and the 25 Cooperative Fishery Research Units and 20 Cooperative Wildlife Research Units.

Considering the short time for assembling data, there was a fine response. Useful information was received from 36 state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies, 13 federal agencies, 98 colleges and universities, 30 State Cooperative Extension Services, 22 Cooperative Fishery Units, and 19