



Historical Roots

- Conservation is a social endeavor conceived by people, designed by people, implemented by people — it doesn't just happen.
- The evolution of our society has been shaped by our relationship with natural resources



Old World Historical Roots

"in the beginning..."

- Parklands--one of the oldest forms of multiple use.
- The concept of protection pre-dates Yellowstone in western culture.
- Ancient Babylon, Cyprus, Greece, Rome, Persia, etc..
 - the earliest around 2500 B.C.



Old World Historical Roots

- Medieval times--preserves were set aside for royalty & the rich, often for hunting reserves, jousting grounds & festivals for the nobility
- Controlled by the Crown
- Peasants not allowed except for festival days
- The first managers--patrolled by wardens & game keepers.
- Poaching was a capital offense!



Historical Roots--The American Experience

"in the beginning..."

- In 1492 Columbus and the Pilgrims found too much wilderness!
- Wildland was seen as the cause of the pioneer's miseries, a barrier to progress, prosperity, and civilization.
- "Conquer nature" & "Tame the wilderness" & "Go west young man!"



Historical Roots--The American Experience

- As the colonists populated the East Coast with towns and cities, gradually their constant fear of wildlands subsided.
- People no longer had to fight nature for survival.
- People began to sense the ethical and aesthetic values of nature.



Historical Roots--The American Experience

- The remarkable exploitation of the eastern forests made people realize our wildlands were disappearing.
- Scarcity was a necessary precondition for recognizing nature as a source of human values, and eventually lead to its preservation.





Historical Roots—Early legislation

- 1634 Boston Commons
- 1641 Great Ponds Act
- Mass Bay Colony--all ponds >10 acres open to everyone to hunt & fish.
- 2,000+ ponds covering 90,000 acres.
- 1682 William Penn gave tracts of land throughout Philadelphia & other cities.
- Established idea that land should be set aside by the state & held for the good of the general public.



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Historical Roots—Catastrophic Problems

- Logging, fire & watersheds...
- George Perkins Marsh...
 - "sponge theory"
- Peshtigo fire in WI 1873 burned 1.2 million acres in 8 hrs. killing 1,500 people!
- Canals versus Railroads
- 1885 Adirondack Forest Preserve "forever wild"
 - (6m A park w/2.6m A State land)



Historical Roots—The American Experience

Fast forward to today . . .

- Government plays a major role in natural resource management.
- We have a complicated system of legal mandates, regulations, planning requirements, harvest controls, allocation permits, & fines & punishment!

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Justification for Public Provision & Management of Natural Resources

- Private enterprise is profit-driven & has failed to manage for *long-term* health of natural resources.
- Only government can take a true long-term approach to management.
- Only through government can adequate land base be acquired (in both urban & rural settings).



Justification for Public Provision & Management of Natural Resources

- Public ownership is democratic and inclusive (paid for by the people, for the people, and it is non-discriminatory).
- Public management equitably distributes the costs. (among rich/poor, young/old, locals/non-locals, & over time) (through taxes, regs, set-asides...)

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Justification for Public Provision & Management of Natural Resources

- Government provides permanency to protection & management of natural features. (commercial interests → frequent turnover → short-term, profit driven)
- The *job is too large* for the private sector!



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Justification for Public Provision & Management of Natural Resources

"it contributes to the welfare of the people."

- Public Land Management contributes significantly to local economies.
- The people demand it, are willing to forego other uses, & are willing to pay for it through taxes. (And they vote for it!)

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Justification for Public Provision & Management of Natural Resources

"A legacy of abuse..."

- Environmental impacts of resource management transcends boundaries...
- Soil erosion, altered water flows, fish & wildlife habitat, air pollution, contaminated ground water...
- Interstate commerce
- *Boom & bust cycle* of resource exploitation is historic & persistent !

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The Challenge to Managers

- Public demands to use & enjoy outdoors regardless of resource values or which agency manages it.
- All natural resource managers (public & private) are affected by public demands, *even if it is not their primary responsibility* (fish, wildlife, forestry, fire protection, grazing, mining, access, etc.).
- Demand is growing from a less-knowledgeable public.
- Providing for UTILIZATION & ENJOYMENT in a sustainable manner is a huge responsibility – *future generations will be your judge!*

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Future Challenges

- Increasing tension among 3 branches of government (& subcommittees & regulatory agencies...)
- Natural resource laws often conflict with each other, & other legislation is often at cross purposes.
- Litigation always results in the least qualified branch of government (judicial) setting natural resource policy.

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