

Thomas Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase (1801) and his subsequent vision of combining all lands between the Atlantic and Pacific into one nation, Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery (1804-06), the Civil War (1860-65), the completion of the first trans-continental railroad line across the United States at Promontory Point (1869), and Theodore Roosevelt's founding of the Boone and Crockett Club (1887), all have one thing in common; they are all products of the 19th century and have become 19th century institutions— institutions further linked by the inevitable consequences suffered upon our nation's natural resources.

Theodore Roosevelt's appreciation of the decline of western wildlife and wanton destruction of its natural resources came from observations he developed during his years of traveling, living, and ranching in the West, from 1883 to 1887. From its inception, the Boone and Crockett Club followed Theodore Roosevelt's westward vision. The Club's first initiatives were all of a western focus: the establishment of the nation's first timber reserves (1891), the enlargement of Yellowstone National Park eight-fold from 700 to 5,600 square miles (1891 to 1894), the creation of Glacier National Park (1910), and Mt. McKinley (now Denali) National Park (1917), the establishment of the National Park Service (1894 and 1916), the founding of the U.S. Forest Service (1905), the creation of the national wildlife refuge system (1903) following the Reclamation Act of 1902 redistributing water in the West, and the Alaskan game law (1902), which followed the Lacey Act of 1900 and provided a model for subsequent game laws.

When Roosevelt organized the Boone and Crockett Club, its members were eastern gentlemen, primarily from New York and Washington, D.C. Its activities were focused in Washington to promote initiatives through Congressional legislation and Executive Prerogative (order). This was the Club's necessary battlefield where its influential members could best achieve their goals and objectives because they were primarily federal in character. Accordingly, the Club's executive offices were in New York and Washington. Later in the 20th century they relocated to Pittsburgh briefly, then back to Washington,

Looking West

Ten years ago in September 1992 the Boone and Crockett Club moved to Missoula, Montana, after 105 years in the East. This is an article that reflects on the Club's renewal and growth over the past decade.

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D.C. and later its northern Virginia suburbs.

The Club's headquarters were moved to Missoula, Montana, in September 1992, for three essential reasons. First, its membership was now diversely scattered across the 50 states. Second, the Club recognized the major national resource issues of the country continued to evolve in the West. And third, the solution to these western challenges was no longer in Washington at the federal level, but rather had devolved to the local level where the wildlife and watersheds existed. It was recognized, moreover, that the immense private land holdings in the West presented an equally bigger challenge and opportunity to the resource issues of the nation.

The Club has now been headquartered in the West for ten years—a full decade. It has become energized and renewed in its strength and vision and commitment to wildlife conservation, just as TR renewed his frail spirit when he fled west following the death of his mother and wife on the same day in 1884. Ten years ago the Club's post graduate professorship program at the University of Montana in Missoula was in its infancy. Today it is nationally recognized and about to be replicated elsewhere. The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch approaches recognition as a fully-fledged research station and working ranch, a mere dream ten years ago. The Lee and Penny Anderson Conservation Education Program housed in the new 5,500 square foot Elmer E. Rasmuson Wildlife Conservation Education Center were likewise just visions of what could be 10 years ago. The George C. Hixon Conservation Summit Center and Depot are fully functioning, and supporting the Club's activities with a professional staff of nine people led by an able Executive Director, compared to one staff person (Jack Reneau) who transferred with our arrival in Missoula. Our records-keeping programs, publications activities, *Fair Chase* magazine, Associates Program, merchandising endeavors, support for 22 com-

mittees and the Executive Committee and the American Wildlife Conservation Partners totaling 40 member organizations are all supported from the Depot in Missoula. Our annual operating budget has grown from \$777,000 (1992) to \$1,717,000 (FY 2003) in support of our programs over the last decade. The Club's assets have grown from \$3.7 million to \$13.25 million during the same decade. The recently completed Campaign for Wildlife will net the Club \$17 million to run our many programs. Our headquarters in Missoula has served us well.

TR's vision on conservation continues to loom large over the conscience of America today. The philosophies embodied throughout TR's life are as relevant today as they were a century ago. His words continue to inspire and motivate us, who TR referred to during his life as "the unborn generations to come." He spoke and wrote always in a historical context, intuitively knowing his words would survive multiple generations. We must now through words and deeds speak to the future "unborn generations to come" thus enabling TR's vision, legacy, and spirit to survive and be perpetuated. We are both beneficiaries of his vision, as well as the stewards of its perpetuation. Our home in Missoula will continue to serve us well. The Club's decision to move west ten years ago and reinforce TR's western-looking vision has been affirmed by its renewal and new strength. I can just hear TR saying with a toothy smile, "Bully!" ■

