



MOHAB

Montana High Adventure Base
at the
Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch



"Our troop has sent three groups to MOHAB over the last two years. The packrafting program is one of a kind and the MOHAB staff incredibly knowledgeable. They have really have created a true 'boys lead' program. The experience has made a huge positive impact on our Scouts and their leadership skills. I should also mention that the Bob Marshall is probably the most spectacular remote wilderness experience you can find in the lower 48. The whole experience is A+." – Dan C., Adult Leader

When I was filling out the application to work for Boone and Crockett, still attending Montana State University at the time, I noticed that not only did the job title list “Facilities Manager” as the position for hire but was also followed by “/MOHAB Camp Director.” After further inquiring during my phone interview with several B&C staff, I learned just what exactly MOHAB stood for—Montana High Adventure Base. (The O is a hitchhiker included to avoid our camp sounding like an uncomfortable medical procedure but doubles to confuse some folks more familiar with Moab, Utah.)

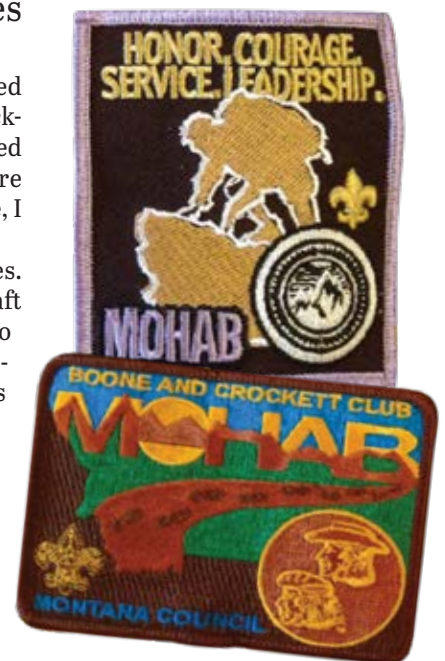
The Montana High Adventure Base is the nation’s only nationally accredited high-adventure Boy Scouts of America (BSA) program that offers backcountry packrafting experiences. Regardless of the apparent acronym fetish, MOHAB is operated out of the Rasmuson Wildlife Conservation Center (RWCC) located on the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch (TRMR) which sits just west of Dupuyer, Montana. (See, I wasn’t kidding about the acronym thing!)

Packrafts, for those that are unfamiliar, do exactly as their name describes. They are highly packable, extremely lightweight, yet very durable, personal watercraft used to traverse up to class III whitewater rapids or the calmest of still water no matter where your travels may take you. Some models are being made to accommodate two passengers, and many hunters have begun taking packrafts on their outings when near water in order to more easily transport harvested game.

Packrafting has not always been a primary program at MOHAB. In fact between 2005 when MOHAB offered its first trek into the “Bob” (Bob Marshall Wilderness complex) and 2013, trekking by foot was the only means of travel available for scouts. While the sightseeing, wildlife watching, fishing, witnessing spectacular vistas from various backcountry peaks and not to mention physically grueling and mentally refreshing trekking-only option were great, packrafting has catapulted MOHAB into the highest category of BSA high adventure programs.

If you know anything about Boy Scouts, you know that patches are a big deal! So much so that at the BSA National Jamboree, there are certain areas set up for patch trading where scouts from all over the continent and even the globe will gather to exchange, trade and barter for the next best patch. Some collections of patches sell for hundreds, even thousands, of dollars and typically many individual troops or councils make a unique patch specifically to offer when attending “Jambo.”

Just as some of our programs offered at MOHAB have changed and evolved throughout the years, so has our patch. The most current patch is awarded to the scout and scout leaders after they have completed their trek. It symbolizes a job well done; a complete and successful experience in which they had started preparing themselves for months, if not years, prior. After reading Dr. Brown’s “Ethics” column (pg. 32), I would like to take you through what our current patch represents and how it relates to the Boone and Crockett Club.



TOP: Adding packrafting has catapulted MOHAB into the highest category of BSA high adventure programs. ABOVE: MOHAB patches through the years. They are a big deal!



The current MOHAB patch.

*"Seeing that I want to major in Fish and Wildlife Biology and Conservation, getting to experience the vast Bob Marshall Wilderness was the time of my life. I had so many amazing experiences in one of the most beautiful places I have ever been to and I will never forget."
— Corbin R., Scout*

In the center of the logo is a jagged peak, similar to the one used for BSA Venture crews, representing the many mountains the scouts will see, climb, and in which they will be immersed for their seven-day program. Many jagged peaks can be seen right from base camp at the RWCC and TRMR. Venture crews can be co-ed, but they must be 14-20 years old in order to participate in any high adventure program—the same audience to which MOHAB caters.

Encircling the jagged peaks is the rough outline of a compass. A compass can help guide scouts not only through the toughest parts of their MOHAB treks, but a moral compass keeps one on the right path throughout their entire life—a philosophy MOHAB hopes to inspire on day one.

Directly below the compass is the most unique piece of the logo. Almost resembling a skull and crossbones, pirate-like appearance is a backpack and two sets of paddles crossed behind it. In the center of the backpack is

a grizzly bear paw print—emblematic of the grizzly-inhabited country they have just spent six nights sleeping and living in while only having what they had meticulously packed and carried on their backs. Although packrafts are great when in water, they too need to be packed and carried when hiking from drainage to drainage.

Bordering the upper portion of the compass are the words: Honor, Courage, Service, and Leadership. To many, these words can mean different things for any variety of reasons. At MOHAB, this is how they are defined:

HONOR

Honor your surroundings by appreciating all it has taken to conserve these wild lands and wild places. Honor those that have fought for so long to establish and protect usable wilderness areas. Respect the wildlife, the water and the rugged grandeur you find yourself in.

Within the first day of camp all of the scouts and

adult leaders learn the meaning of conservation as well as the history and mission of the Boone and Crockett Club and its founders.

COURAGE

Be courageous while trying something you may have never done before. A multi-day wilderness excursion with zero connectivity between you and the rest of society will be something many never get the chance to do. Absorb the solitude, and turn it into serenity. Attack every rapid with a can-do attitude!

Some scouts attending MOHAB have never been in a wilderness or ever slept multiple nights outdoors.

SERVICE

Remember, you are not the only one who uses this land and these resources. Leave it better than how it was found. Serve others on the trail that may need your guidance or help, and they will return the favor when it is you that is in need.

Day two of the MOHAB experience involves programs at base camp (RWCC) including trail meal packaging, group gear distribution, packraft training, expedition leadership and a shakedown hike.



*"MOHAB was the pinnacle of my trekking experience, covering over 100+ miles on foot and river. The scenery in the Bob Marshall Wilderness was epic! Spending the 4th of July along the Chinese Wall is a memory that I will never forget. Definitely recommend the MOHAB trek to everyone who wants a great wilderness packrafting experience."
— Steve B., Adult Leader*



When returning to the TRM Ranch, many troops voluntarily participate in conservation-related service projects such as pulling noxious weeds or removing unneeded, dilapidated fencing.

LEADERSHIP

Every day you have the opportunity to be a leader on your trek, although not always will you be the first one in line going down the trail or river. Lead by example. Always be sure you are right, and then go ahead. And even when you are back home and look at this trip only as a fond memory, continue to lead the path of conservation within your community.

On the first night at MOHAB base camp the scouts are tasked with choosing their own 5-day route through the 1.5 million-acre Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. An intimidating yet exciting and inspiring task!

Each scout has the opportunity to be the “leader of the day” as well as the “navigator for the day.” Each trek is scout-driven; meaning, every decision the party makes will be made by the scouts themselves and not the adults. From route itineraries to meal packaging and campsite selection, the scouts are in total control of their trek.

I often tell guests at the TRMR and RWCC that MOHAB is the worst part of my job. And I mean it. MOHAB is the worst part of my job because I am the base camp director, meaning I have to stay at the RWCC and cannot attend weekly treks with the rest of the crew. Being the first

point of communication between backcountry travelers and the “if-needed” emergency rescue responders (plus various other duties) sometimes has its exciting moments but often I find myself looking over wilderness maps and itineraries dreaming of what could be around each river bend or contour line.

One of the greatest parts of my job however is

being the one that gets to shake the hand of every scout that completes a trek, and present them with their very own MOHAB patch. Through their stories and photos, sunburned faces and callused hands, I can see and hear the newfound appreciation for our wild lands and wild places that has been instilled within them. And for being a part of that, I am honored. ■



“Getting to explore the Bob Marshall Wilderness with some of my closest friends was one of the best experiences of my scouting career. It was great learning to packraft and navigate through wilderness without trails. It was an opportunity to showcase my scouting skills while learning new ones in an environment that was rigorously challenging, but also fun.” — Spencer L., Scout



If you know of a scout or troop that is ready to earn their patch, call 406-472-3311 or visit www.montanahighadventurebase.com for more details. You can also follow MOHAB on Facebook and Instagram @BSAMOHAB



AN EXCERPT
FROM
NORTH
AMERICAN
WILDLIFE
POLICY AND
LAW | PART 2

Development of a policy to protect wildlife by developing refuges is an example of a long-term progression from a concept to a policy. As early as the 1800s explorers and writers with knowledge of the American West raised concerns about the wanton slaughter of wildlife for food, fashion, and commerce.

The first federal act of Congress to protect wildlife and fish on public land was the establishment of Yosemite Valley Park and its transfer to the state of California in 1864. It was later returned to the federal government. In 1872 Yellowstone Park was established, primarily to protect the geysers and hot springs, but also to protect wildlife. This action was followed by a flurry of federal land acquisitions and policy enactments. Over time, the various wildlife refuge units were created, usually for scientifically recognized wildlife habitat needs, but also by private donations, or due to the personal preferences of legislators and other government officials or in response to crises (Fischman 2005). The largest current units are the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge at 7.8 million ha (19.3 million ac) and the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge at 7.7 million ha (19.0 million ac), whereas the smallest is the

Mille Lacs in Minnesota at 0.2 ha (0.5 ac) (Fischman 2005).

The first unit established to specifically and primarily conserve wildlife on federally owned lands was the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea near Alaska in 1868. Ulysses S. Grant approved congressional action to protect the northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) there, with the concept of obtaining revenue from management of this wildlife resource. President Benjamin Harrison established the first reserve for fish by executive order. His Forest Reserve Act of 1891 protected fish, wildlife, and forest resources at the Afognak Island Forest and Fish Culture Reserve in Alaska. More knowledge of the fish and wildlife resources of the nation was clearly needed, so in 1871 the Federal Office of the Commissioner of Fisheries was established, as was the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy in the Department of Agriculture in 1886. Thus far the trend had been to protect lands, fish, and wildlife primarily for their economic value, from which the government could derive income. But soon the public became more interested in protecting our wildlife resources, and a plethora of hunting, fishing, and conservation-minded nongovernmental groups (NGOs) were formed, such as the Boone and

THE NEED FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND POLICY:

National Wildlife Refuges

Robert D. Brown

Crockett Club and the Audubon Society. They lobbied for state laws to protect specific species and in some cases even hired game wardens (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2006).

When Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901, those NGOs had a friend in the highest office of the land. Through use of executive orders, he established the first bona fide refuge for non-marketable wildlife (the brown pelican [*Pelecanus occidentalis*]) at Pelican Island, Florida, in 1903. The Florida Audubon Society hired the warden Paul Kroegel on a salary of one dollar per month. To further protect colonial water birds from the feather, egg, and guano marketers, additional bird refuges were established at Breton, Louisiana (1904); Passage Key, Florida (1905); Shell Keys, Louisiana (1907); Key West, Florida (1908); Quillayute Needles, Washington (1907); Farallon Islands, California (1909); and parts of the Hawaiian Islands (1909). The first refuge on

Bureau of Reclamation lands was created in 1908 at Lower Klamath, California. Roosevelt established 17 such “overlay” refuges in one day in 1909 (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2006).

To manage these properties, the Bureau of Biological Survey replaced the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy in 1905. During Roosevelt’s term in office, 51 executive orders established wildlife reservations in 17 states and three territories. One challenge of establishing policies by executive order is that they can be changed by the next president, whereas those enacted by Congress and signed by the president cannot. Congress thus got into the act by establishing the Wichita Mountains Forest and Game Preserve in 1905, the National Bison Range in 1908, and the National Elk Refuge in 1912. The latter was the first to be known as a “refuge,” and the first tract of that land was purchased by the Izaak Walton League and donated to the government. President

William Howard Taft added almost 1.1 million ha (2.7 million ac) of the Aleutian Islands chain to the system in 1913.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 was first enacted in 1916 to implement Canada's Migratory Birds Convention, which provided the impetus to protect habitat along with the waterfowl. The Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge was established in 1924 and the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in 1928. However, efforts to fund these and other refuges through a one-dollar federal waterfowl-hunting stamp were rejected multiple times in Congress. It was not until 1934 that the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act of 1934, also known as the Duck Stamp Act, provided revenue for what was becoming a network of protected lands.

The year 1934 was an auspicious year for conservation in that the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act authorized federal water resource agencies to acquire lands for mitigation and protection of fish and wildlife. In that year, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed a committee of J. N. "Ding" Darling,

Thomas Beck, and Aldo Leopold to advise him on waterfowl issues. Darling was soon appointed head of the Bureau of Biological Survey, and he hired J. Clark Salyer II to manage the refuge system. Salyer was to serve in that position for the next 31 years. Additional congressional actions and executive orders, including the Migratory and Mammal Treaty with Mexico of 1936, the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937, and the Lea Act of 1948 strengthened the refuge system. These Acts established refuges in the Carolina Sandhills in South Carolina, the Piedmont in Georgia, Noxubee in Mississippi, and Necedah in Wisconsin (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2006).

Eventually, in 1939, the Bureau of Biological Survey and the Commission of Fisheries were transferred from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Interior, then merged to form the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in 1940. That same year President Franklin Roosevelt decreed that the titles of the myriad units be changed from reservations, bird refuges, migratory waterfowl refuges, and wildlife refuges to the common

"national wildlife refuges" (Fischman 2005). During World War II the nation's priorities shifted away from protecting wildlife and their habitats. But after the war, returning veterans and their families increased the pressure for more wildlife and scenic recreational opportunities. Authority to acquire additional refuge lands was approved by Congress in 1956 with the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956. Amendments made in 1958 to the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Act of 1934 and the Wetlands Loan Act of 1961 provided funding. The latter Act approved a \$200 million loan to be spent over 23 years and to be repaid from duck stamp revenues. The Refuge Recreation Act of 1962 ensured that refuges could be used for hunting (now limited to 40% of the land area) and other recreational and educational uses, provided they did not interfere with the purposes for which the land was acquired. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, established in 1965, provided more funding for land acquisition.

At long last, in 1966, members of Congress realized this hodge-podge collection of laws and executive orders

needed coordinated administration and management, and thus they enacted the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966. The Act provided guidelines for refuge purposes and again stipulated that all uses of refuge lands must be compatible with the original purpose for which the refuge was established. Science was to play a major role in land acquisition and management, as promoted in reports in 1963 and 1968 by Department of Interior committees led by A. Starker Leopold and the publication of Robert MacArthur and E. O. Wilson's book, *The Theory of Island Biogeography* (1967). The book and the reports highlighted the need for a long-term goal of a "system" of protected habitats, large enough to be viable habitat for the long-term success of the species and preferably linked together with other protected areas (Fischman 2005).

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 redirected purposes on some existing refuges and provided for additional land acquisition for species threatened with extinction. Twenty-five additional refuges have been added under this Act, including



President Theodore Roosevelt established the first national wildlife refuge in 1903 at Pelican Island, Florida.

Boone and Crockett Archives

the Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge (for *Tympanuchus cupido attwateri*) in Texas, the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge (for *Grus canadensis pulla*) in Mississippi, the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-Tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus leucurus*) in Washington, the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge in Florida for manatees (*Tri-*

The refuge system is often “under the radar” of the public and Congress as compared with the government’s larger, better-known land-holding programs.

chechus manatus), and the Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge in Hawaii for indigenous birds. The system now contains 180 animal and 78 plant species listed under the ESA (Fischman 2005).

As one might expect, not everyone wants a national wildlife refuge (NWR), national park, or other federally managed property in their backyard. One of the common complaints of counties was that these holdings did not pay property taxes. Thus counties with a preponderance of public lands had difficulty funding their fire and sheriff’s departments and their school systems. In 1976 Congress passed the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Act, which authorized a payment of 75 cents per acre of federal land to the county. The subsequent amended Refuge Revenue Sharing Act of 1978 allowed the payment of 25% of the revenue generated from activities (such as mining, timber harvesting, etc.) on NWRs to be paid to the counties. The calculation of this percentage is complicated, however, and does not depend on the revenue of the local refuge.

Without a doubt, the largest addition to the refuge system came with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 and the subsequent Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. These Acts tripled the acreage in the system by expanding seven refuges and adding nine new ones, totaling 21.7 million ha (53.6 million ac) in additional land. This acquisition was and continues to be

highly controversial, due to interest in developing oil and natural gas deposits that are believed to be under the refuges. In fact, the entire refuge system has been criticized for its management. In a 1989 report (United States Government Accountability Office 1989), secondary uses harming conservation goals were found on 59% of the refuges. These included off-road-vehicle operations, motor boating, mining, logging, grazing, and military exercises. This led to a lawsuit by the Wilderness Society, the National Audubon Society, and the Defenders of Wildlife (Fischman 2005). To a degree, this criticism led to the next legislation.

President Bill Clinton signed the most recent modification of the refuge system in 1997 as the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. This provided “organic” legislation that protected previous executive orders, provided new administration and management guidance, and clarified the threefold mission of the system: to maintain the biological integrity and a diversity of ecosystems, to provide for environmental health, and to ensure appropriate wildlife-related recreational uses of the refuges. In addition to adding the preservation of unique ecosystems as a

purpose, the Act ensured that commercial development, unlike recreation, not only must be compatible with the unit’s purpose but also must make affirmative contributions to the system’s mission. The Act mandated that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service acquire water rights for its refuges, an especially important point because many of the sites are in or are below watersheds. The Fish and Wildlife Service must also monitor the status and trends of the plants and animals under its care and apply adaptive management as needed (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2009). This often calls for collaborative planning with each refuge’s neighbors, including those upstream of the refuge. Restoration is also required, as many of the non-Alaskan refuges had been degraded by farming before they entered the system (Fischman 2005).

Over 47 million people visited our refuges in 2014 (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2017). The system includes more than 545 units in all 50 states, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Johnson and Midway Atolls, and other Pacific islands, totaling almost 60.8 million ha (150.3 million ac) of habitat. They support 700 bird species, 220 mammal species, 250 reptile species, and an uncountable number of amphibian and fish species (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2017). These lands and waters include 768,903 ha (1.9 million ac) of wetlands in the prairie pothole region of the United States for waterfowl production and 8.2 million ha (20.3 million ac) of Wilderness Areas (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2006). But compared with the land holdings of the United States Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the National Park Service, the

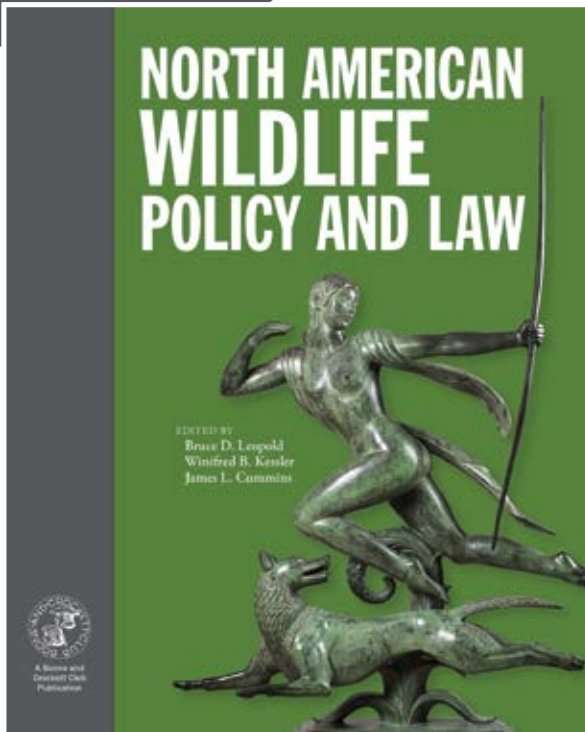
refuge system has the fewest visitors and receives the smallest federal appropriation per acre (Fischman 2005). The refuge system is often “under the radar” of the public and Congress as compared with the government’s larger, better-known land-holding programs. In addition, many NWR sites continue to be threatened by upstream pollution from farming or industry, nearby development, pressure for energy development, and, of course, climate change.

Despite its challenges, the National Wildlife Refuge System has continued to grow for over 110 years, providing a large, yet imperfect network of fish and wildlife habitats across our nation. It has protected and managed habitats for plants, fish, and wildlife, provided access for hunters, fishers, and wildlife watchers, and preserved needed examples of our varied ecosystems. Through its development, it has provided a model for other countries to emulate.

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A basic understanding of wildlife law and policy is essential to becoming a complete sportsmen in today's world!



North American Wildlife Policy and Law

Bruce D. Leopold, Winifred B. Kessler, and James L. Cummins

North American Policy and Law begins by examining the need for, and history of, wildlife policy and law; wildlife and gun ownership; wildlife law enforcement; constitutional authorities and jurisdictions; how laws and policies are made; statutory law and agency rule-making; relationships of Indigenous peoples to natural resources; and subsistence resource use. Building on this foundation are detailed sections addressing:

- The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation
- Jurisdictions in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico with detailed coverage of key federal laws
- The roles of state and provincial agencies, Native American tribes, and conservation organizations
- International wildlife conservation
- Policy jobs in conservation
- Roles of politics, professionals, and the public

The book's extensive coverage makes it an excellent reference for anyone interested in natural resource management, public policy, or environmental law.



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