

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Private Land Owners' Responsibility



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A COMMON JUSTIFICATION OFFERED BY AGRICULTURAL LAND OWNERS WHO OVERGRAZE PASTURES, CONTINUE SOIL-DEPLETING FARMING PRACTICES OR CUT TIMBER BY METHODS PROVEN TO HAVE HARMFUL RESIDUAL EFFECTS IS THAT "THIS PROPERTY IS MINE AND I CAN DO WHAT I WANT." SUCH ACTIONS ARE USUALLY TAKEN IN PURSUIT OF MAXIMUM PROFITABILITY AND UNDER THE BANNER OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERSHIP. TRUE, FOR TWO HUNDRED YEARS AMERICA HAS GROWN AND PROSPERED PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THIS CONSTITUTION-GUARANTEED RIGHT. BUT DO THESE LAND OWNERS EVER STOP TO THINK THAT THEY ARE REALLY ONLY TEMPORARY CARETAKERS OF THE LAND THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO ABUSE?

The owner of a property two hundred years from now will likely not have a clue, without a legal search, nor really care who the owner was in 1994 but the effects of the land's prior misuse may still be evident. Just because a particular agricultural activity can be proven to be economically feasible or may even be beneficial to the area's economy is no justification for a land owner to pursue his/her enterprise to the long-term detriment of the resource.

Robert W. Fogel, a 1993 Nobel Prize recipient, was criticized when he wrote in his 1974 book that slavery is economically viable. While he subsequently made it clear that he thought slavery was immoral, at his Nobel news conference Fogel said "if you want me to say it was unprofitable or inefficient, I won't." Fogel likened the controversy over his slavery views to the notion of "selling your dying parents for

pher, scholar, conservationist and Boone and Crockett Club member Aldo Leopold wrote "we abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect...That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics."

The Boone and Crockett Club, through the Boone and Crockett Wildlife Conservation Program at the University of Montana, has committed substantial financial support to a bold, far-reaching plan to address problems that face our country's besieged natural resources. Among other goals, the Program hopes to be able to demonstrate to private land owners as well as public land managers profitable and sustainable production alternatives to the unsustainable methods practiced by some land owners today. If the attitude of "do on my property what is best for me now" cannot be changed to consider what is best for the long-term health of the resource, land owners in 2194 will wonder how could we have been so selfish.

"This property
is mine and
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dogmeat" to reduce the burial costs. "We don't do it because the thought revolts us. There is such a thing as morality and morality is higher than economics."

In his book, *A Sand County Almanac*, published in 1949, philoso-

THE BOONE & CROCKETT CLUB

HOW THE BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB BEGAN

The Boone and Crockett Club was founded by Theodore Roosevelt at a time when it was one of only two organizations in America dedicated to the conservation of our nation's natural resources.

Roosevelt, who was deeply concerned over the plight of America's wildlife, hosted a dinner in December of 1887 for ten like-minded sportsmen friends.

This influential group recognized that what had happened in the

preceding decade to the vast buffalo herds and the millions of passenger pigeons could easily happen to other species unless efforts were made to control sport and market hunting and provide wildlife the ability to coexist with man.

That evening the Boone and Crockett Club was founded with the mission to promote two major goals: The conservation of critical wildlife habitat and the principle of hunting in "fair chase".

THE MISSION

It is the policy of the Boone and Crockett Club to promote the guardianship and provident management of big game and associated wildlife in North America and to maintain the highest standards of fair chase and sportsmanship in all aspects of big game hunting, in order that this resource of all the people may survive and prosper in its natural habitats. Consistent with this objective, the club supports the use and enjoyment of our wildlife heritage to the fullest extent by this and future generations of mankind.

