

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Robert Model

President

Boone and Crockett Club

Means to a Worthy End

I was fortunate to return to Scotland for the stalking of red deer in October. I had time to be alone on the moors and reflect on what the Club has been, is, and will be. The “will be” focused on the coming decade of *Fair Chase*.

Fair Chase is first class and getting better. It skillfully blends articles by accomplished writers extolling hunting under fair chase conditions, articles celebrating the Club's history and traditions, and penetrating discussions of current events and emerging issues in conservation.

I think of *Fair Chase* as being in the tradition of *Forest and Stream*, a magazine started by one of the Club's founding members, George Bird Grinnell, in the later part of the 19th century. *Forest and Stream* com-

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bined hunting tales with a conservation message and was a focal point for the hunter/conservationists of the day. Grinnell cleverly attracted readers and provided a platform for the emerging conservation movement. It provided Grinnell a “bully pulpit” to put forward the evolving message of land and wildlife conservation.

As successors of our Club's founders, we face the same conservation questions - dealing with the preservation of open space, managing wildlife in the face of encroaching human development, and addressing the continuing societal tensions between consumptive and non-consumptive use of wildlife resources. *Fair Chase* brings forward articles dealing with conservation history, current policy debates, challenges to ways of life that revolve around wildlife and wild places, mixed with stories and photographs celebrating fair chase hunting. Articles dealing with conservation issues and history are explored in an admixture of styles combining academic rigor and entertaining presentation. They provide food for thought mixed with entertaining stories that celebrate hunting and the enjoyment of nature.

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Fair Chase readers relish the vicarious adventures and experiences provided by the hunting tales. But, I hope that they give consideration, and some thought, to the articles that deal with the complex issues that have direct bearing on the future of the hunting they cherish. After all, the hunting stories would not exist if there were no places to hunt or hunting rights were impinged.

Sitting on the sidelines while a dedicated few take on the struggle of conservation is a cop-out. When we

assume an association with the Club, we inherit the responsibility to be advocates for and watchdogs over the welfare of wildlife, and promote wise and shared use of public lands, fair chase hunting, and responsible stewardship of all lands. Realizing the values of private lands as wildlife habitat continues the focus of a Club Member who was known as the “father of wildlife management” - Aldo Leopold.

The Club is not merely a social club or a keeper of the records of big game trophies. Our basic reason for existence is the care and perpetuation of wildlife and fair chase hunting, integrated management of public and private lands to maintain functional ecosystems, and sharing our understanding that healthy land is the foundation of human welfare. These are continuing issues that are at the heart of our reasons for being.

We are a privileged group. Many Regular Members are persons of wealth and all are persons of societal stature. Our Professional Members are, by definition, persons distinguished in the arts and sciences. Our Associates are dedicated to conservation and fair chase hunting. It is incumbent upon us to accept commensurate responsibilities. We seek for ourselves, and promote for others, responsible behavior as hunters and land stewards. We seek to recognize and thank those who share their lands with hunters. We promote understanding of the sacrifices landholders make to provide wildlife habitat. *Fair Chase* puts forth those ideas and generates solutions to future challenges.

During the holidays, take a moment to reflect, count our blessings, renew our dedication to leadership in conservation, and realize that we, and our kindred spirits, are the keepers of the flame kindled by our predecessors. Be well, in good spirits, and ready to continue on our worthy quest. Indeed, to steal lines from Robert Frost,

*The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep. ■*

To send a Letter to the Editor, mail to:

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