

CAPITOL CONSERVATION

Consolidations May Lead to Adversity



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WASHINGTON, D.C. SPRING 1994. THE CONSERVATION FRONT IS FAIRLY QUIET HERE IN VERBAL VILLAGE ON THE POTOMAC. ATTENTION FOCUSES MOSTLY ON WHITewater, CRIME, DEFICIT, BUDGET, FOREIGN TRADE BALANCES, DRUGS, HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, RUSSIA, JAPAN, AND MYRIAD LESSER TOPICS, INCLUDING, OF COURSE, EACH LEGISLATOR'S NEXT ELECTION AND FUND RAISING.

The conservation stuff is pretty much fundamental. Few new initiatives are being considered, except for an occasional flyer that would tap the federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program to finance the medical bills of "victims of crime" or place heavy new taxes on firearms and ammunition for much the same purpose. In short, all would cut into funds long dedicated to wildlife purposes. And there are a few legislators who are hell bent on separating hoodlums and criminal types from firearms, even if it means stepping on the toes of the vastly greater number of law-abiding people. Wildlife, itself, is not such a popular topic

this year, except, possibly, as a source of seed money for something else. Things may be done to wildlife this year, but little will be done for it.

You may recall, when the present Administration took office, the new Secretary of the Interior voiced great concern about prudent and improved use of natural resources on federal lands, environment and biodiversity, the latter being the 'new word' in government and professorial circles these days. In order to better direct thinking and action on lands administered by his agency, the Secretary proceeded on his own to form a National Biological Survey by consolidating research personnel and funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and others.

The thinking was, and is, that by gathering researchers in one group, attention could be focused on the 'big' issues of coordinated federal land administration and management, the effect of action on one agency's lands and on oth-

ers on all living resources. In short, biodiversity, defensible in concept, but impractical from the standpoint of agency missions, human relations, and, unfortunately, how things too often fail to work where people are involved.

What the Secretary's move really accomplishes is to shift the problem-solving capacity of an agency's mission-oriented research people to a second agency that bears virtually no responsibility for resources entrusted to the first. The word now going around town is that the National Biological Survey may lose up to 25% of its staff in the current budget fracas, with many researchers to be separated completely from government. Should that come to pass, the much-needed research capability of those fine resource agencies will have been gutted. And wildlife's interests will suffer apace. As one wit said, "Praise be that we aren't getting all the government we are paying for."

ALDO LEOPOLD MEMORIAL AWARD

B&C Member Honored at Conference



JAMES G. TEER, A MEMBER SINCE 1981, RECEIVED THE ALDO LEOPOLD MEMORIAL AWARD FROM THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY.

B&C PROFESSIONAL MEMBER, DR. JAMES G. TEER, RECEIVED THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY'S HIGHEST AWARD AT THE RECENT NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONFERENCE. THE ALDO LEOPOLD MEMORIAL AWARD - A MEDALLION AND CERTIFICATE - WAS PRESENTED TO TEER BY TWS PRESIDENT DR. HAL SALWASSER AT THE NORTH AMERICAN BANQUET. THE AWARD RECOGNIZES TEER'S OUTSTANDING, CAREER-LONG CONTRIBUTIONS TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.

Teer has been a leading wildlife researcher, teacher and administrator throughout his career. His research has included whitetail deer, waterfowl, cottontail rabbits, big game ranching, ringtails, white-wing doves, collared peccary, bobwhite quail, exotic game animals and endangered species. Lately, he has led the charge on promoting the incor-

poration of human needs into wildlife conservation.

While at Texas A & M, Teer built one of the nation's strongest wildlife, fisheries and outdoor recreation education and research programs. His many students are now employed around the world in key conservation positions. He also found time to be President of the Wildlife Society during the late 1980's.

Lately, Teer envisioned, then carried out the first International Wildlife Management Congress last fall in San Jose, Costa Rica. The Congress, co-sponsored by the Boone and Crockett Club, was attended by more than 700 professional wildlifers representing more than 50 countries. The focus of the meeting was the protection of living resources by and for people whose quality of life and well being depend on sustainable uses of wildlife.

Teer continues active leadership in wildlife conservation from his post as Director of the Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation in Sinton, TX, and his Chair of the Policy Task Force of the Boone and Crockett Club. And he still finds time to serve international conservation needs and get a little hunting in from time to time with friends and colleagues.

Teer became the 14th Boone and Crockett Club member to receive the Leopold Award, first given in 1950, joining other B&C conservation leaders: J.N. Darling, Aldo Leopold, Olaus J. Murie, Ira N. Gabrielson, Clarence Cottam, C. R. "Pink" Gutermuth, A. Starker Leopold, Durward L. Allen, Ian McTaggart Cowan, Russell E. Train, John S. Gottschalk, Joseph P. Linduska, and Laurence R. Jahn.

Our sincere congratulations to Dr. James G. Teer for this well deserved award.