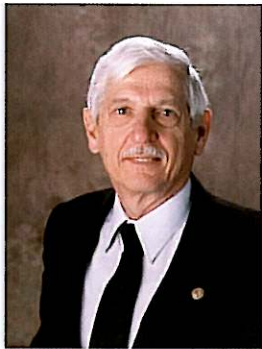


THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Uniting Hunter-Conservationists Through the National Wildlife Conservation Partners Summit



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President
Boone and Crockett Club

I was doing some research in order to be prepared for this summer's Wildlife Conservation Partners Summit and came across an essay titled "Brief History of the Boone and Crockett Club" in the book *Hunting at High Altitude*, edited by George Bird Grinnell in 1913. The perspectives of the Club, at that time only 26 years old, are not that much different from what we have today, now that the Club is 113 years old.

To give you a sense of the achievements and frustrations of the founders of the conservation movement in America, I quote a number of paragraphs directly from this essay:

In December, 1887, Hon. Theodore Roosevelt, then member of the New York Assembly, at a dinner at his residence in New York City, proposed the formation of a club of American hunting riflemen, to be called the Boone and Crockett Club. The suggestion was warmly welcomed by those present, among whom were E.P. Rogers, Archibald Rogers, J. Coleman Drayton, Thomas Paton, Col. J.E. Jones, Elliott Roosevelt, J. West

same objects, so that now, for many years, the Boone and Crockett Club has had one hundred regular members—its limit—and from twenty-five to forty associate members [Now called professional members]. Among the latter are a number of men who have performed notable services in behalf of the objects to which the Club is devoted.

These objects were announced as being:

(1) To promote manly sport with the rifle. (2) To promote travel and exploration in the wild and unknown, or but partially known, portions of the country. (3) To work for the preservation of the large game of this country, and so far as possible to further legislation for that purpose, and to assist in enforcing the existing laws. (4) To promote inquiry into and to record observations on the habits and natural history of the various wild animals. (5) To bring about among the members interchange of opinion and ideas on hunting, travel and exploration; on the various kinds of hunting rifles; on the haunts of game animals, etc.

Such were the purposes of the Club when it was formed, and for a number of years each received its fair share of attention. Gradually, however, the settlement

killed, but the old wild frontier of the limitless prairie and of the steep and rugged unknown mountains is gone forever.

In the years that have elapsed since its organization, the Boone and Crockett Club has accomplished a number of things which entitle it to the lasting gratitude of the American people. Through the efforts of its members have been carried on a number of successful battles for good things, whose importance the Club saw far in advance of the public opinion of the time, and which in recent years has come to be generally appreciated, although not as yet wholly understood.

Among the achievements claimed by Grinnell (in his words mostly) for the Club at that time are:

- 1) The carrying on, to the successful end, the fight for the preservation of Yellowstone National Park.
- 2) The Forest Reserve System (National Forests) covering lands aggregating 100 million acres is due in large measure to the efforts of the Boone and Crockett Club.
- 3) The Club founded the New York Zoological Society.
- 4) Succeeded in having a bill passed by the New York Legislature, which prohibited the hunting of deer with dogs in the Adirondacks and the killing of deer in the water.
- 5) In 1902 the Club secured the passage of a bill to protect Alaska game.
- 6) The idea of game refuges-sanctuaries originated with the Club.
- 7) The Boone and Crockett Club caused the bill to create Glacier National Park to be passed by Congress.
- 8) Great parks and immense reservations were set aside in Canada at the insistence of a Member of the Club.

Despite these great accomplishments Grinnell was frustrated by the belief that the Club could not live up to its first two objectives, to promote manly sport with the rifle and to promote travel and exploration in the wild and unknown portions of the country.

Now, at the beginning of the new millennium, it is both informa-

of the country and the sweep of population to the westward made it more and more difficult to carry out the two first-named, while the same causes magnified the importance of the third and fourth of these objects. Great changes have taken place in portions of the United States, where at the date of the formation of the Club wild game was found in abundance, and over much of the western country the advancing tide of settlement has swept out of existence all the game. The Boone and Crockett Club, organized as an association of hunting riflemen, to promote manly sport with the rifle, and to investigate the wild and unknown portions of the country, can no longer do either of these things within the limits of the United States. Little hunting trips may be made, and occasionally a head or two of game

Roosevelt, Rutherford Stuyvesant, and George Bird Grinnell. A constitution was formulated, and in January, 1888, the Club was organized with the following officers and members:

President, Theodore Roosevelt; Secretary, Archibald Rogers. Members: Albert Bierstadt, Heber R. Bishop, Benjamin F. Bristow, J. Coleman Drayton, D.G. Elliott, George Bird Grinnell, Arnold Hague, James E. Jones, Clarence King, Wm. H. Merrill, Jr., Thomas Paton, John J. Pierrepont, W. Hallet Phillips, E. P. Rogers, Elliott Roosevelt, J.E. Roosevelt, J.W. Roosevelt, Rutherford Stuyvesant, W.A. Wadsworth, Bronson Rumsey, Lawrence Rumsey and W.D. Pickett.

As time went on, these men added to their numbers others interested in the



BOONE AND CROCKETT LIFETIME ASSOCIATES

tive and challenging to look back and ahead. Our founders were adaptive; as conditions changed the Club was "quick on its feet" and adjusted its priorities to meet immediate challenges. The greatest was decimation of game animals and habitat, and the Club was remarkably successful in finding effective solutions. As we look forward today, 87 years since Grinnell's essay, the challenges are equally great. Some are unchanged - promoting and protecting hunting, while many are new - deteriorating quality of habitat, uncoordinated and conflicting federal land laws, regulations, and policies, eroding scope of state wildlife management, declining hunter participation, and increasing importance of private land for wildlife.

As our founders did in their time, we are now joining with our partners - hunter/conservationists - to address current wildlife conservation problems. We are uniting through the National Wildlife Conservation Partners Summit, to pool our collective strength and address present and future wildlife conservation challenges. I take great courage and confidence from the success of our founders. That success is a beacon for all of us today, to expect and accept no less of ourselves. The National Wildlife Conservation Partners Summit is a renewed effort of the Club to resume its national wildlife conservation leadership role. It's an effort I know our founders would applaud. It feels good. ▲▲▲

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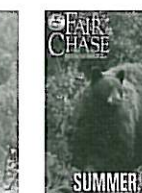
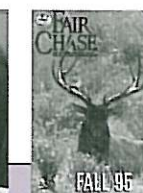
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