

# FROM THE PRESIDENT



Lowell E. Baier  
PRESIDENT  
Boone and Crockett Club

## A Great Story to Tell

This fall, America witnessed the release of Ken Burns' spectacular television series, *The National Parks*, on PBS. Burns gives Theodore Roosevelt and the Boone and Crockett Club due

credit for the inspiration to establish and then enlarge the national park system. Dr. Douglas Brinkley's simultaneous publication of *The Wilderness Warrior, Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America* further chronicles Roosevelt's evolution as the leader of the conservation movement in America and the establishment of the national policy on conservation. Both of these major releases bear testimony to the originality of the man and his legend, the legacy of conservation, and America's continuing fascination with both as a beacon to the past and future.

*The National Parks* visually shows the parks as one of the spectacular achievements of the conservation movement. The major historical figures behind the establishment of the national parks are those who implemented the conservation movement with Theodore Roosevelt; they developed their insight, passion, and original concepts of conservation from their extensive hunting expeditions, wilderness treks and adventures afield. Douglas Brinkley's formidable 940-page book accurately portrays how Roosevelt's conservation ethic was a direct result of his connection to the natural world from his intense dedication to hunting and collecting all species of birds and animals. That foundation was crucial to his evolution into history's premier conservationist, and to that of his many colleagues, who, with Roosevelt,

orchestrated the conservation movement in America—among them, George Bird Grinnell, Gifford Pinchot, Madison Grant, C. Hart Merriam, etc.


Contemporaneous with this issue of *Fair Chase*, the Boone and Crockett Club released its newest publication titled, *Theodore Roosevelt Hunter-Conservationist*, written by R.L. Wilson. This third update and revised edition of what was formerly titled *Theodore Roosevelt Outdoorsman* (1971 and 1994), reminds us succinctly what the life of America's foremost hunter-conservationist looked like. The vigorous life Roosevelt led afield, his intimate knowledge of birds, animals, and habitats, the raw courage he demonstrated in the wilds, and his keen understanding of firearms and the correct paring for hunting big game. Larry Wilson's third edition recalls for America, that hunter-conservationists, inspired colleagues of Roosevelt, led the charge from which flowed its very foundation and cornerstones: the national parks, refuges, monuments, forest system, wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, and our uniquely scenic natural treasures like the Grand Canyon, Yosemite, and Yellowstone, as well as the laws and regulations that protect and govern these riches.

Today the public-at-large controls these treasures, utilizing "informed" opinion without ever having set foot in the wilderness or gone more than a mile from a parking lot in a state or national park. The general public has lost its connection with the natural world; yet their academic, electronic environmentalists attempt to control the management policies for our wildlands and wildlife. Roosevelt in his day called similar sham spokesmen "nature-fakers."

Both *The Wilderness Warrior* and *Theodore Roosevelt Hunter-Conservationist*

remind America that today's responsible hunting and sporting community remains naturalists and conservationists, and have all-embracing insights to contribute in the continuing dialogue of how our natural resources are to be managed. Like Roosevelt, Grinnell, Pinchot, and their circle, sportsmen today personally witness the wilderness in its absolute brilliance and raw harshness from weeks spent hunting, camping, and trekking where there are no trails, where there is no trace of humans having been there before.

Sportsmen trek for endless, painful hours with their favorite firearm, backpack, and horses in search of big game through colorful mountain meadows lush with wildflowers, sidehilling through miserable boulder and scree fields spread across steep mountain slopes; through impenetrable areas of blown-down timber, through thick alder patches or thorny oak brush; across spongy tundra or through treacherous bogs and quicksand; through snow, ice, and glacial streams, and across baking hot cactus-covered deserts—at times confused with loss of direction or distance. Morning is always spectacular from the mountaintop a hunter spent three to four agonizing hours climbing with a full backpack, drenched in sweat and starting before dawn to top out with the sunrise to the reward of surveying distant mountain peaks that shine like glimmering snow-capped cathedrals. Sportsmen make camp along beautiful deserted lakes and streams in areas untouched by man. They are forced to hunker down under a spruce tree with a small campfire and bivouac for the night during an early blizzard, wrapped in a reflective foil survival blanket for warmth, eating cold emergency rations to sustain their strength and avoid hypothermia. Sportsmen's field boots get soaked crossing glacial streams, and are put

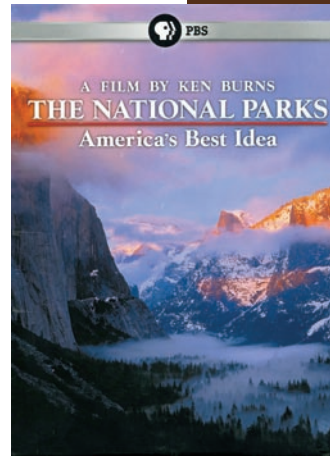


Bison trek through snow in Yellowstone National Park.

**New! PBS Series**  
**The National Parks:**  
**America's Best Idea**  
**A Film by Ken Burns**

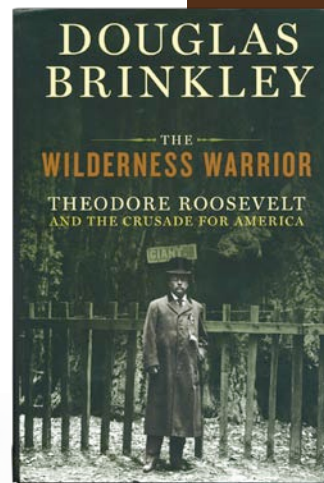
**THE NATIONAL PARKS** is the story of an idea as uniquely American as the Declaration of Independence: that the most special places in the nation should be preserved for everyone. The series traces the birth of the national park idea in the mid-1800s and follows its evolution for nearly 150 years, chronicling the addition of new parks through the stories of the people who helped create them.

- 720 minutes on 6 DVDs
- Associate Price: \$99.99 plus S&H
- Available through the B&C web site or call toll-free 888/840-4868



**The Wilderness Warrior**  
**By Douglas Brinkley**

In this groundbreaking epic biography, Douglas Brinkley draws on never-before-published materials to examine the life and achievements of Theodore Roosevelt our "naturalist president." By setting aside more than 230 million acres of wild America for posterity between 1901 and 1909, Theodore Roosevelt made conservation a universal endeavor.



Destined to become a classic, this extraordinary and timeless biography offers a penetrating and colorful look at Roosevelt's naturalist achievements, a legacy now more important than ever. As we face the problems of global warming, overpopulation, and sustainable land management, this imposing leader's stout resolution to protect our environment is an inspiration and a contemporary call to arms for us all. Available through on-line retailers and your local bookstore.

- 915 pages, \$34.99
- Available at your local bookstore or on-line at Amazon.com

in their sleeping bags at night so they won't freeze. Their cold, stiff fingers shake so much they can barely hold a match steady to light a campfire, eating a freeze-dried dinner at midnight after a long stalk on game far from camp. It's all part of extensive experience afield taken in stride by a dedicated sportsman.

The diversity and beauty of terrain and wildlife sportsmen see in the wilderness is overwhelming, and they anguish when watching a pack of wolves kill a beautiful ram too old and tired to run, or coyotes disembowel a pregnant mule deer caught in heavy snow. It is they who know well the game they hunt, their habits, habitat, and anatomy from endless hours studying their quarry first in their library, thence through a spotting scope or binoculars afield.

Sportsmen and sportswomen committed to conservation of our fish, wildlife, and wildlands are kindred spirits at heart. They yearn for the opportunity to find peace, tranquility, and solitude in nature and fellowship in camp. They become conservationists as a natural outgrowth of their appreciation for their sport. To quote a legendary sportsman who is now 92, listen to his poetic reflections on a life afield (which have been paraphrased and adapted for this column). Only an experienced sportsman-conservationist could write these words:

*Hunting isn't just hunting to kill an animal. It's hunting for sport rather than for food where the true enjoyment of the sport lies in the challenge, the lore and the battle of wits... It's the feeling of satisfaction that comes from limiting your kill instead of killing your limit. It's communing with nature where the chief reward is a refreshed body and a contented soul, where a license is a permit to use, not abuse; to enjoy, not destroy... It's subscribing to the proposition that what's good for animals*

*is good for the hunter and that managing animals for the animal rather than for the hunter is fundamental to the solution of our wildlife problems. It's appreciating our animals, respecting fellow sportsmen and giving serious thought to tomorrow.*

From a hunter's experiences and observations afield comes reverence for the wilds, and from that grows the soul of a true conservationist. Hunter-conservationists witness firsthand how wildlife and its habitat are reacting to increasing human and animal populations, land fragmentation, climate change, invasive species, management policies, and so many more influences. Who better than a hunter-conservationist to speak to management policy for our wildlands and wildlife?

Today there is more focus on the environment due to climate change than any time since the 1960s and '70s when environmental legislation galvanized the nation's focus on clean air, water, and industrial pollution. Today the dialogue seems to focus on green energy, carbon footprints, sequestration and reduction, biofuels, cap and trade credits, and international treaties. A national focus on fish, wildlife, and wildlands seems to be lost in today's debates. Brinkley, Burns and Wilson's great works may help to refocus the American public on our natural world.



© ISTOCK.COM/MINDFULL IMAGES

**BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB**  
FOUNDED IN 1887 BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

**CLUB —**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Club President Lowell E. Baier  
Executive Vice President – Administration  
Ben B. Wallace  
Executive Vice President – Conservation  
William A. Demmer  
Secretary Robert H. Hanson  
Treasurer Timothy C. Brady  
Vice President of Administration  
Manuel J. Chee  
Vice President of Big Game Records  
Eldon L. “Buck” Buckner  
Vice President of Conservation  
William A. Demmer  
Vice President of Communications  
Marc Mondavi  
Class of 2009 Arlene P. Hanson  
Class of 2010 Marc C. Mondavi  
Class of 2011 Morrison Stevens Sr.

**FOUNDATION —**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Foundation President Gary W. Dietrich  
Vice President John P. Poston  
Vice President Thomas D. Price  
Secretary Robert H. Hanson  
Treasurer Timothy C. Brady  
Class of 2009 Larry C. Bucher  
Remo R. Pizzagalli  
Samuel B. Webb, Jr.  
Class of 2010 Jeffrey A. Gronauer  
Earl L. Sherron, Jr.  
Mark B. Steffen  
Class of 2011 Edward B. Rasmuson  
James J. Shinnors  
Leonard J. Vallender

**COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

Administration Manuel J. Chee  
Associates Program Lanny S. Rominger  
Audit Edward B. Rasmuson  
Budget and Finance  
Robert H. Hanson and Morrison Stevens Sr.  
Conservation Harold J. Salvasser  
Conservation Education Kaush Arha  
Conservation Grants Winifred B. Kessler  
Conservation Leadership Inst. Steve Williams  
Conservation Policy  
Robert Model & Stephen P. Mealey  
Development Ben B. Hollingsworth, Jr.  
Electronic Media Mark B. Steffen  
Government Affairs Robert Model  
History Leonard H. Wurman  
Hunter and Conservation Ethics  
Daniel A. Pedrotti, Jr.  
Library H. Norden van Horne  
Membership James J. Shinnors  
Merchandise Gary W. Dietrich  
National Collection of Heads and Horns  
Robert H. Hanson  
Nominating C. Robert Palmer  
Outreach Marc C. Mondavi  
Physical Assets Earl L. Sherron  
Policy and Governance Ben B. Wallace  
Publications Howard P. Monsour, Jr.  
Records Eldon L. “Buck” Buckner  
Sagamore Hill C. Robert Palmer  
Strategic Planning Stephen P. Mealey  
TRM Ranch Fred Hirschy  
University Programs  
Daniel H. Pletscher and Mary Webster

As their works illustrate, wildlife and wilderness remain the “window” to the natural world through which the public perceives the outdoors, whether they see it on television or feeding in their backyard.

Hunter-conservationists with their primeval connection to nature and its wildlife have a duty to the public and their sporting community to become the teachers and interpreters of their experiences and observations of wildlife and wildlands. We, the hunters, are at the intersection where nature, history, and politics interface. Who is better able to communicate wildlife, wildlands, and their needs to the public than the sporting community with its unique insights? This becomes today’s true test of conservation stewardship, following in the footsteps of Theodore Roosevelt’s great adventure to first observe and examine, then interpret and responsibly manage and conserve America’s wildlife, wildlands, and scenic treasures. While hunter-conservationists made history a century ago laying the cornerstones and foundations that underpin the conservation of America’s natural resources, it’s old news. That message is lost on the American public today. We understand the message because we preach to ourselves, a parochial, insular choir, which is the extent of our comfort zone. Our sporting community can no longer rely on yesterday’s dated headlines that self-servingly say sportsmen’s licensing fees and Pittman-Robertson/Dingell-Johnson excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery, and fishing tackle pay all the bills to support wildlife and habitat management. They don’t today. That revenue (\$740,924,388 in FY 2009) covers only 75 percent of state management costs. The corollary Federal government’s expenditures to support wildlife and habitat management in the current FY 2010 is \$35 billion, of which sportsmen will contribute only an estimated \$2 million in Federal duck stamp sales, and related refuge user fees. Our old message is flawed and far too complicated to communicate in a sound bite and gets lost in today’s debate, which the public controls, not the sporting community. The public is totally disconnected from nature, yet has a governing voice in its management.

Because sportsmen understand wildlife and wildlands from firsthand observations and experiences, our voices can be the lens and amplifier through which the public can better appreciate the needs of wildlife and its habitat. We are more than just hunters and anglers. We are keen observers, naturalists, and conservationists from serious, firsthand field experience. This

is what gives us credibility, and provides a new role for the hunter-conservationist today. The sportsmen’s skill set, however, will require political acumen, aptitude and sensitivity, responsible, balanced dialogue, informed, skilled communicators, the right format, channel, medium and message, strength in numbers and organizations, access and credibility, and funding to underwrite political action. We cannot come off with a wack ‘em, stack ‘em, Joe six-pack image. Our dialect with the public has to avoid the inevitable “trip wire” questions of “How can you call yourself a conservationist when you hunt and kill animals?” or “Don’t you just want to conserve animals so you have more to kill?,” thus forcing sportsmen to defend themselves, which sidetracks and paralyzes debate on serious wildlife management issues.

We as hunter-conservationists have a great story to tell, but it’s got to be packaged differently in today’s environment. We have to redefine our role to be credible with the public and influence debate. The image and message of our sporting community to the public must change, and the role of the hunter-conservationist must become an interpretive one through which the public can hear firsthand what the natural world is really like, and its management needs and challenges. A century ago, TR said “wildlife cannot speak for itself, so we shall, and we must,” but today’s generation requires a new voice and a different message.

Douglas Brinkley’s *The Wilderness Warrior*, and Larry Wilson’s *Theodore Roosevelt, Hunter-Conservationist*, both have the potential to properly inform the public and influence opinion of the role heroic figures like Theodore Roosevelt played to establish and protect our wildlife, parks, refuges, and forests. By celebrating this honorable past, these books offer a footprint to the future, and the vital continuing role today’s sportsmen and women are playing in the contemporary dialogue on how best to manage America’s natural treasures. The insight of hunter-conservationists is a beacon to both the past and future.

Theodore Roosevelt founded the Boone and Crockett Club in 1887 with fellow sportsmen, all hunter-conservationists, and these members were Roosevelt’s brain trust, colleagues, and lieutenants in leading the crusade of the conservation movement. The leadership of the hunter-conservationist community has been the embodiment of the Club’s membership and continues so today with Theodore Roosevelt’s legacy in its bloodstream. ■

