

EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATION LEADERS

The Boone and Crockett Club University Program is designed to provide science-based knowledge from seasoned wildlife professionals and educators to college graduates in the wildlife field to better prepare the graduates for the responsible and wise management of wildlife in the future.

FROM:
Texas A&M University



Red Duke's legacy for wildlife conservation and policy

The Boone and Crockett Club signed an agreement with Texas A&M University in March 2017 to create the Boone and Crockett Dr. Red Duke Wildlife Conservation and Policy Program. The program honors the service of A&M alumnus Dr. James H. "Red" Duke (1950) as a surgeon, educator and wildlife conservationist. Dr. Duke served as president of the Boone and Crockett Club (1986-1987) and the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (1986). "Red Duke fellows" will continue to work on B&C strategic challenges such as energy, land management, and private lands that are particularly important to Texas and the nation. The Red Duke fellowships will expand the existing Boone and Crockett Club professorship program in wildlife and fisheries sciences at A&M with courses, internships, and practical experiences that prepare students to develop policy options for wildlife conservation in North America

In particular, the Red Duke program at A&M will expand opportunities for students to learn leadership in policy for wildlife. Our intention is to attract bright young

minds that may one day become leaders of the caliber of figures such as Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, William Hornaday, and J.N. "Ding" Darling. Land grant universities such as Texas A&M have strong programs to train managers of natural resources. Students in these programs are exposed to the human dimensions of management but have little opportunity to develop skills in public policy. Unfortunately, most people who train to work in public policy have little knowledge or experience of the natural world even if they are well versed in the regulations governing wildlife, waterways, and land. Wildlife and natural resources are poorly funded in government budgets largely because the connections between policy and the functions of natural systems are neither understood nor appreciated by legislators or their staff.

As a large research

university, Texas A&M prepares bachelors, masters, and doctoral students to objectively collect and analyze information. Credible information from basic research is the hallmark of the North American educational system and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Texas A&M is revising courses in wildlife and fisheries sciences to engage students by integrating basic science with policy to address an array of problems including under-abundance (e.g., endangered species), over-abundance (e.g., invasive species) and human-wildlife conflicts (e.g., predator control). The program at A&M is also preparing wildlife biologists to work with people by developing social skills (e.g., outreach), analytical skills (e.g., geographic analysis), and professional skills so that graduates can make a difference on an issue. Our goal is that more of these graduates will find a career in

a network of public and private employers doing the work of wildlife policy. Red Duke exemplified the core values of respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service that continues to guide A&M students. The new agreement between A&M and the Club continues Dr. Duke's lifelong interest in science and conservation by investing in core values of stewardship. The Club is working with A&M to raise \$4 million for an endowment that will continue to support the work of Red Duke fellows. ■

If you would like to join us in sustaining Red Duke's legacy or would like more information on the Boone and Crockett Dr. Red Duke Wildlife Conservation and Policy Program, please contact Mark Klemm at (979)845-9582 or mklemm@txamfoundation.com.

This commemorative plaque was erected by the Boone and Crockett Club in September 1987 as part of its centennial year activities. It recognizes the discovery of Grinnell Glacier and other accomplishments of long-time Club member George Bird Grinnell, who discovered the glacier in 1887. Club President in 1987, Red Duke is pictured at right.

