

## NATURAL RESOURCES DIVERSITY

In my early career developments in natural resources one of the key thoughts was that in college education in forestry and other natural resource disciplines had very few opportunities for women to participate. Some of the colleges were for males exclusively. Women weren't allowed to enroll. So no women graduated and none were then qualified to teach either.

My first assignment following my doctor's degree was with the US Forest Service and the School of Forestry at the University of Missouri in Columbia, MO. At that time the School of Forestry was part of the College of Agriculture. It was here that I realized that all of the faculties were male and would not allow female students. And then it was obvious that the administration and the entire college believed that either women should not be learning this profession or they simply weren't capable of learning it.

It was kind of astounding to me. Here we are trying to help improve the profession, help those who actually do the on the ground work every day on ranches and family businesses and yet we're excluding half the population from being able to expand and nurture their expertise. When I would go to the ranches, you will be working with both men and women, boys and girls, yet here we are not allowing any females to be formally trained in the very field they're already working in and undoubtedly have insights and knowledge and problem solving skills to contribute. Some administrators felt that giving an academic spot to a woman would be wasteful. Perhaps they might actually go out and work in the field for a while but after a year or two, marriage and babies. Other interested women might want to work in the field but it was clear to everyone that they would never be able to stick with it.

In Missouri, I began to think about this problem. Out in the field, I often would be talking to ranch women about management decisions, production and harvest. Other times a student would talk to me after class mentioning that when he was a kid on a ranch or farm it was his mother who had made those decisions we were talking about in class. She might have been widowed and found herself by necessity running the ranch or farm. Or perhaps one area of the ranching operation had become her obligation in order to split up the duties more equitably.

After a few years, I began to notice and meet women who had some experience in forestry and range management and would want to sign up for a course.

I thought if you don't bring women into the decision-making process that men begin to think in one direction and the whole focus gets out of whack.

About this same time I began doing some International work in rural Brazil. When I'd go out to the farm it would be a woman managing the entire operation. She'd be in charge of a number of kids, the crop production, maintaining the house. The husband would be in the city working a job and not come home except maybe twice a year.

Getting women involved, in these villages means we were addressing the movers and shakers. These women had already proved they could be creative in their efforts to figure out how to start a small village school to educate their children. These women were determined to figure out how to get these things done.

While in Missouri, I started going to Brazil on the behalf of President Kennedy who was concerned that his program of giving assistance to rural farms and farmers was working as well as he hoped.

In this work we dealt with conflicts between the Baptist missionaries and the Catholic Church. In one area we entered, was a contingent of Baptists getting ready to establish a church in competition with the Catholics who were fairly entrenched in the area. The Baptists encouraged girls to enter their programs which gave them a leg up on the Catholic Church who only educated boys. So you would get a woman who may be a village leader and who also held positions in the Catholic Church. But when the Baptist Missionaries invited girls too, the women might resign their positions in the Catholic hierarchy and join the Baptists so all of her children could all be educated.

After all the work in Brazil, one of the primary things that I began to formulate in my mind was here we have all these natural resources. When you are working with educated folks at the university level you realize they have one view about what should be done with our natural resources: one view. But when you get out to rural areas in the US or overseas, it is a completely different situation. One where the folks who are actually doing the work are having to make use of what is actually available and make that work. Their resource pool may be very different than that which the educators think rural populations have. The differences are crucial in understanding how to assist in every facet.

And when you discount—and eliminate—at least half of the population you are making a huge mistake.

Within the rural areas you have three categories of educational systems: the rich farmer who always had big chunks of land with poor workers, educated only his own kids and maybe his top aides' children; government (military) workers who have their own system and; the Church types of schools who educates children in the way they want them to be trained. So each system has their own goals for the education that they provide to the selected few.

In Indonesia, for example, the school systems change depending on the topography, it's different island by island; shore versus inland; rural and city; Christian versus Muslim versus Catholic.

In this life the one thing that is always inflexible is that we have to deal with more than just land management, policy. Starting with Brazil where we discovered that you don't separate range from forestry, the rural areas had to be dealt with as a whole: Religion, education or the lack of education, available resources as well the unavailable.

We would find that you are dealing with a huge range of different kinds of management. Sawmill production in the US and its sophistication.

Then in China they took us to one their top of the line sawmills and we were shocked. Life in the city versus rural areas right outside of the city in the areas that directly service the city's needs are different from really rural life. The farther you get from the city the more different and difficult it becomes.

Hosts like to take you out and show you their cities because they are the very best of the show places.

After Kennedy's assassination, Johnson was not interested in any of the Brazilian programs. He did not want to muck around with all that Catholic/Baptist fighting.