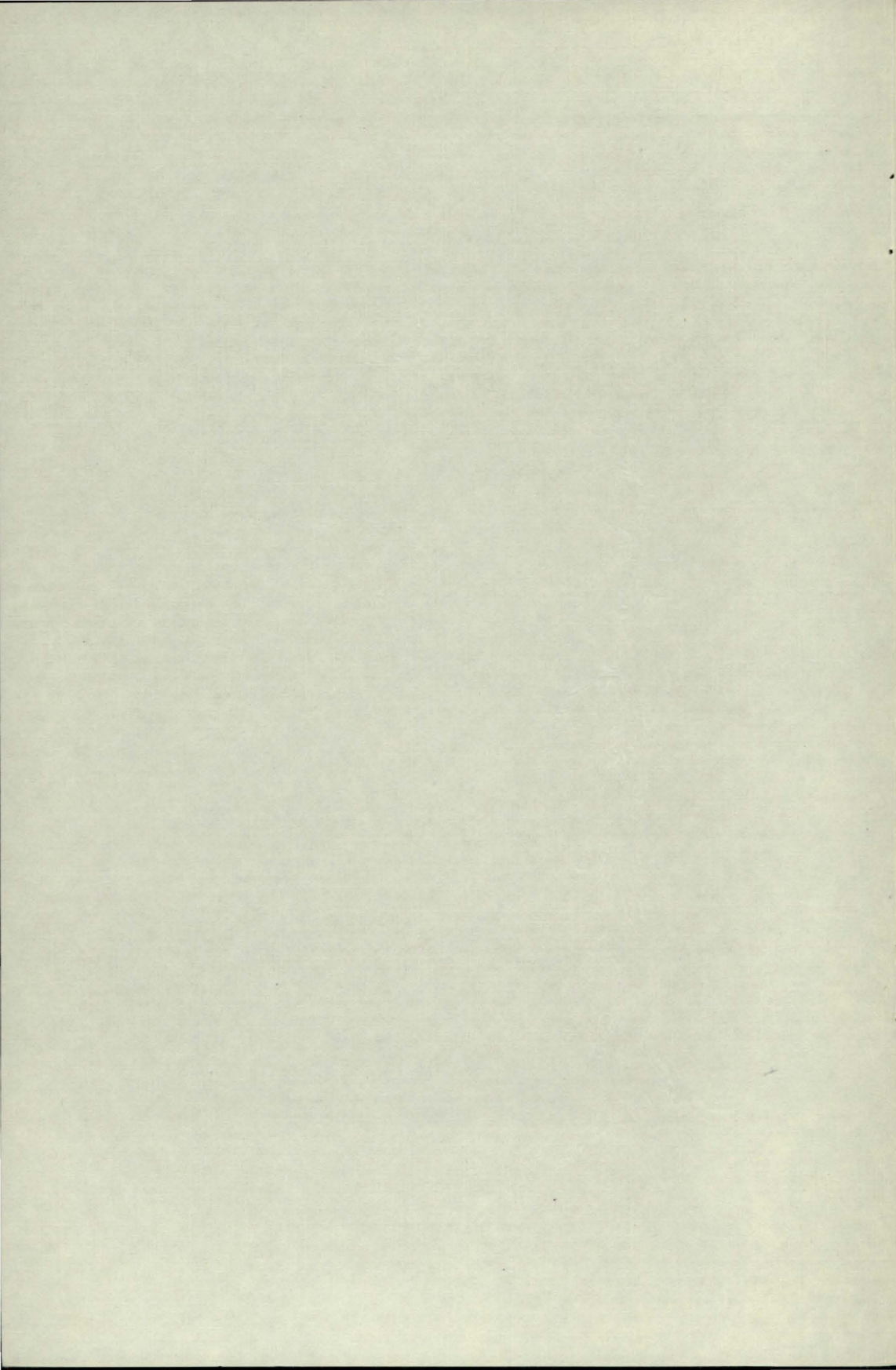
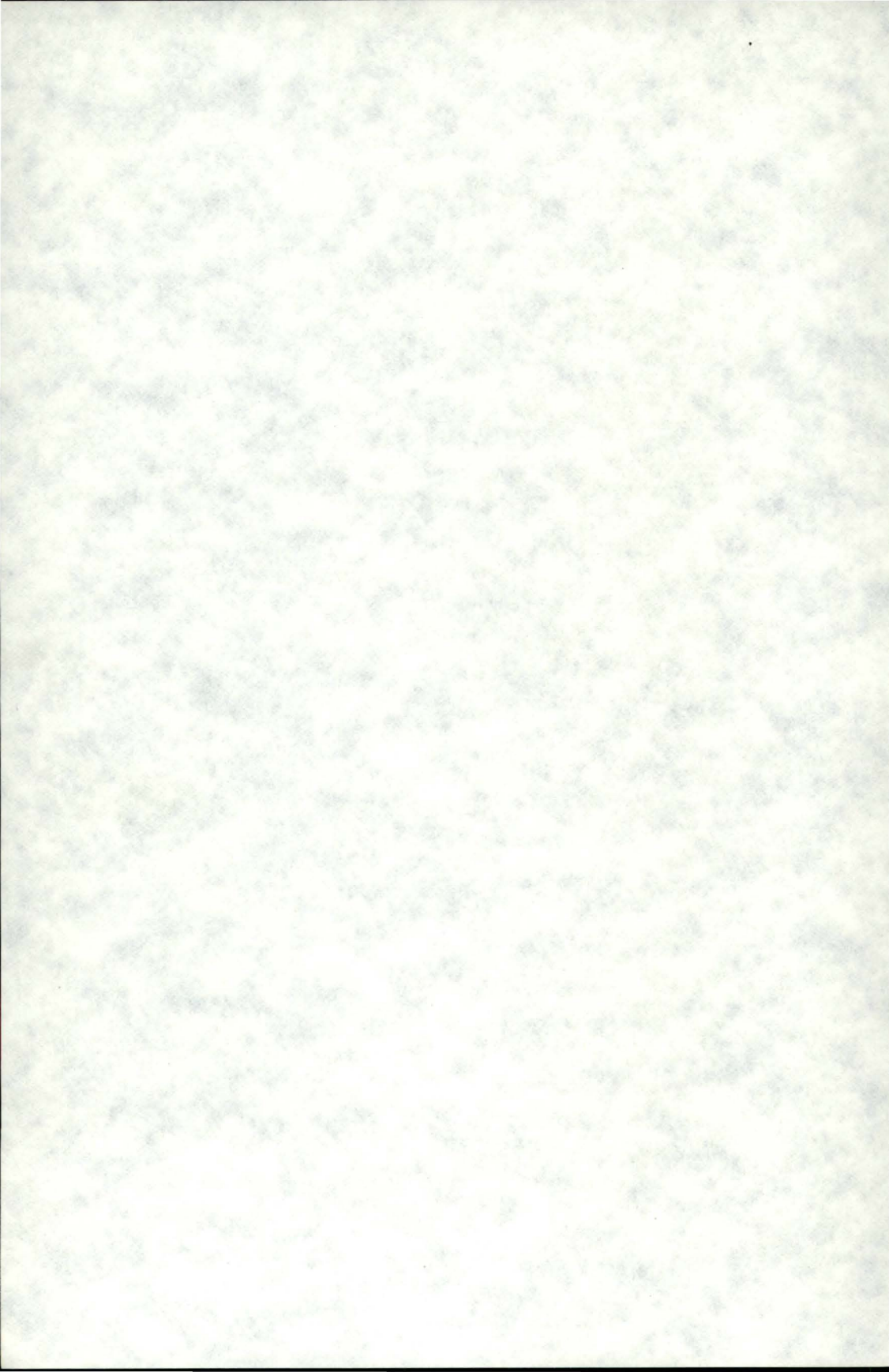


*PATRICK F. NOONAN*

*WILDERNESS RESOURCE  
DISTINGUISHED LECTURESHIP*







*WILDERNESS RESOURCE*  
*DISTINGUISHED LECTURESHIP*

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*PRESERVING*  
*AMERICA'S*  
*NATURAL HERITAGE:*  
*THE DECADE OF*  
*THE EIGHTIES*

*Patrick F. Noonan*

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO WILDERNESS RESEARCH CENTER

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## *Dean's Introduction*

ERNEST D. ABLES

I want to welcome you this evening to the 4th annual Wilderness Distinguished Lectureship. We in the state of Idaho live in an area that is richly blessed with wilderness resources, and it is for this reason that the University of Idaho has instituted the Wilderness Research Center which is sponsoring tonight's lecture.

Although wilderness is often thought of as an expansive, roadless tract of land run by some government agency, it is heartening to realize that a private, non-profit organization, The Nature Conservancy, has been devoted to the task of preserving ecologically significant lands more than 10 years before the passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964.

Mr. Patrick Noonan, who until the end of last month served as president of The Nature Conservancy, is with us this evening. Mr. Noonan has worked in private practice as a land planner, and also served as Senior Park Planner for the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission.

Holding advanced degrees in both city and regional planning and business administration, he is also a licensed real estate broker and professional land appraiser. A member of the American Society of Planning Officials and of the American Institute of Planners, Mr. Noonan is a senior member of the American Society of Appraisers and holds membership in a number of regional and national conservation organizations. In 1974 he was a recipient of an American Motors conservation award in the professional category. He also serves on the Advisory Board of the Duke University School of Forestry.

As a Life Member of The Nature Conservancy, Mr. Noonan continues to be active in its programs, and is working to publish a history of The Nature Conservancy in time for its 30th anniversary in 1981. The remarkable success of the Conservancy is due in no small part to the diligent work of Mr. Noonan, who served as its president since 1973. Under his direction, the Conservancy's land conservation activity quadrupled to the present level of 200 projects per year.

But rather than bask in past accomplishments, Mr. Noonan will speak tonight on preserving America's natural heritage in the decade of the eighties.

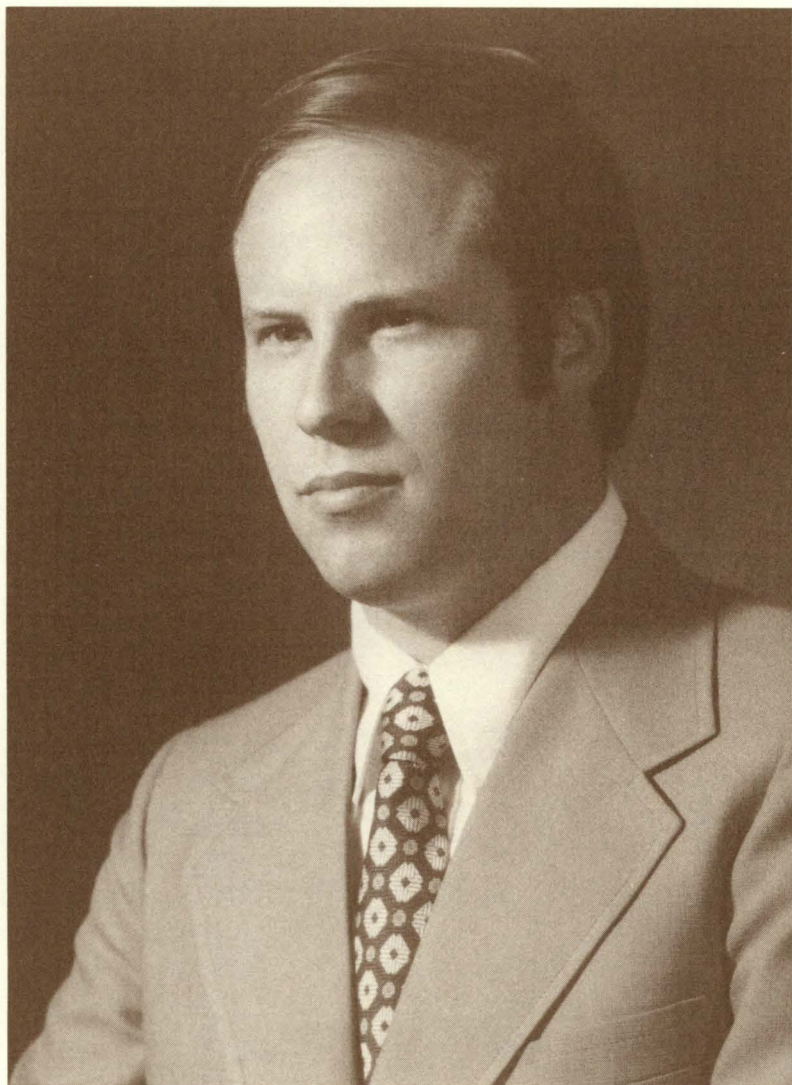
It is my distinct pleasure to introduce Mr. Patrick F. Noonan.



*Dr. Ernest D. Ables is Associate Dean, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, and Director, Wilderness Research Center, University of Idaho.*







*PRESERVING  
AMERICA'S  
NATURAL HERITAGE:  
THE DECADE OF  
THE EIGHTIES*

*Patrick F. Noonan*

**W**e who live in America are blessed, for we have inherited from the good Lord a beautiful and bountiful land. We have an abundance of natural resources, an unparalleled diversity, and an economic system based on individual initiative and enterprise. This land which brought our forefathers here as a land of opportunity continues to beckon new residents daily.

Today, we live in very exciting times: times of tremendous environmental awareness and also times of awesome environmental degradation. Yet conservation is not new. I'd like to share with you a quotation: "The conservation of natural resources is our fundamental problem. Unless we solve that problem, it will avail us little to solve all others. To solve it, the whole nation must

undertake the task through their organizations and associations, through the men and women whom they have made especially responsible for the welfare of the states, and finally through Congress and the executive.”

The source? President Theodore Roosevelt, October 4, 1907, in preparation for the historic conference of state governors on conservation. He called the conference to focus on the future of our natural resources. That conference is generally recognized as the formal beginning of the conservation movement in America.

And where are we less than 75 years after President Roosevelt’s warning that the conservation of natural resources is the fundamental problem in America?

Today the Environmental Protection Agency tells us that 3000 acres of prime wildlife habitat are lost to development each day. An estimated twenty million acres will be urbanized by the year 2000. This amounts to over one million acres of land each year.

Interestingly, in 1940, there were over 40,000 farms in Massachusetts alone. Do you know how many farms are in Massachusetts today, some 40 years later? 3600. In every state, prime farmland is being converted at the rate of 12 square miles a day.

In the last couple years, we taxpayers—you and I—have spent over 5 billion dollars in disaster aid—federal tax dollars for disaster aid—and 90 percent of the reason this aid was needed was overbuilding in flood plains in flood-prone areas. And yet we have a flood insurance program that pays the flood-stricken to rebuild in the exact same spots.

Today, every major east-coast river has been polluted, among them the Kennebeck, Hudson, Potomac, and Chatahoochee; and, according to the scientists, these rivers are slowly becoming death systems for our oceans. The

James River in Virginia—and this is particularly disheartening to me because I come from Virginia—a magnificent resource for generations of Virginians, was recently the subject of Kepone poisoning. Scientists have just finished their studies of the results of that Kepone poisoning, and they estimate it will be two centuries before the James River is free of contamination. And there is no known solution at this time. There is nothing we can do.

A recent estimate for clean up—even if we knew how to clean it up—is close to 3 billion dollars. That is the legacy that we leave to future generations of Virginians, that I leave to my children's children's children.

The lovely Housatonic River in Connecticut, one of the finest eastern trout streams, is now off-limits to fishing because of PCB contamination in recent years. And the Love Canal in New York—you've read about that—is a monstrous hazardous wastes site that will cost 100 million dollars, your tax dollars, to clean up.

The Environmental Protection Agency now estimates that there are 30,000 hazardous wastes sites in this country. What an expense to bear when you realize what it will cost in taxpayer dollars to restore and clean up those sites in the decade ahead.

### ***A Problem of Attitude***

Why are we where we are in 1980? To begin with, the single-purpose planning that we've had in this country concentrates on growth and industrial development, leaving conservation to get lost along the way. And, by the way, let me mention—I do not come from a conservation or ecology background. I've come out of business schools, and I've worked in the free enterprise system. What first got me into conservation was when the trout stream that I fished in as a boy outside of Washington, the only trout

stream we had, became polluted and was no longer a trout stream. I believe in the free enterprise system. But I also believe in beautiful natural areas and in clean water and clean air, and I believe that we all have an obligation to protect these.

The major cause of our being where we are today is very simple: our attitude toward land and natural resources. Traditionally, land in America has been viewed as a commodity to be conquered, something to be bartered and sold. It's interesting that 90 percent of the millionaires in this country made their money in real estate. And it is also interesting that in 9000 years of existence the American Indian lived in harmony with the land, but what have we as a nation done to that resource in a little over 200 years?

It has been said that Americans need water to drink, air to breathe, and land to make money. Remember the New Mexico developers, those lovely individuals from New York and the East who painted the desert green and put up green plastic trees and took pictures and marketed the land through the mail?

We wonder why we have energy shortages, endangered wildlife, floods, polluted streams and lakes, but we have only to look at our traditionally negative approach to conservation for the explanation. We have no one to blame but ourselves. We are turning this magnificent land, this beautiful land from sea to shining sea, slowly but surely into a wasteland. In many cases, development has come first, and, as I was taught in planning school, conservation was what was left over to be colored green.

Interestingly enough, in my planning courses I had not one course in biology or ecology or in the dynamics of natural systems. This was in the late '60's—not that long ago. And planning schools are still turning out planners who do not understand the natural systems, either forestry or any of the other natural sciences.

Unfortunately, some see regulation as the best solution. I say unfortunately because we have over 150,000 new laws per year in this country—and an average of ten regulations just to interpret each law. You can imagine what we've created in our nation's capital. It's an awesome monster. In many cases, as you know, our land-use controls, including zoning, are also outmoded and do not relate to the land itself. And even if we have zoning, over 50 percent of all land-use decisions in this country are still made without benefit thereof.

Sometimes I think we are still in the Dark Ages when it comes to understanding our natural systems and blending planning and the profit motivation in order to get the job done in this country.

### ***Toward a New Awareness***

But, fortunately, there is a new awareness in America today. Land is beginning to be seen as a resource and not as a commodity. I have found in my past ten years as a professional with The Nature Conservancy that almost all of us have a common interest in conservation. I have also seen a change in our attitudes about natural resources and land that has, in many cases, been forced upon us. Witness that "environment" and "quality of life" are now household words, which they were not when I was a child growing up in the '50's and '60's.

The Chairman of the Xerox Corporation, Mr. McCulloch, recently wrote in the *Harvard Business Review* that whenever he walks through a park or fishes a stream in a national forest, he says thank you to the individuals who took the time and effort to set the area aside. The President of the Society of Real Estate Appraisers said last year that "recent changes require the real estate appraiser to develop ecological awareness, for it can mean the difference between profit and loss, and in many cases avert financial ruin."<sup>1</sup>

And just this past April, Charles Seymour, a professional MAI appraiser, the highest possible appraiser designation, wrote the following words in an article titled "Outlook for Appraising in the 1980's": "Our concept that development rights come from and run with land ownership 'up from the bottom' like minerals or crops is being replaced. It is now possible to view them as coming 'down from the top,' created and allocated by society to each parcel of land."<sup>2</sup> Then, in a revolutionary statement for the real estate appraisal profession, he continued, "This calls for a change from the view that land is a commodity to be exploited and traded, into an ethic that regards land as a resource."<sup>3</sup>

I thought I was reading Aldo Leopold. But this was Charles Seymour from the appraisal profession. It is a fascinating turn of events, a flip-flop in terms of how people look at real estate.

This new awareness is not happening just with appraisers. A recent survey of business school graduates asked questions focusing on business and the environment and had three major results. These results are important, for they reflect the attitudes of this country's future business leaders:

- 1) Sixty-eight percent, over two-thirds, felt corporations have a *duty* to better the quality of life through nonprofit expenditures.
- 2) Sixty-eight percent also felt that industry *should be forced* to fight pollution more aggressively.
- 3) Only one-third felt large corporations want to correct the pollution problems they are causing.

Remember, these are the responses of business school graduates.

I have enjoyed the pleasure of working with businessmen who share my concern for conservation, but who need



the facts so they can act responsibly toward the environment and toward the shareholders for whom they work.

I would like to share with you a quotation from a successful businessman and member of my own Board of Governors at The Nature Conservancy, who recently said: "Modern man's proudest works have devastated his most important inheritance. Almost every triumph of his civilization has been a defeat for the land—the land on which he lives; the thin, finite covering of his planet upon which he depends for life itself. For all our wondrous works and soaring dreams, the process of life is sustained by six inches of soil and the fact that it rains every now and then."<sup>4</sup>

That's from a business leader. And there are many, many business leaders who share that concern, who believe in the free enterprise system, and who want the facts.

Our estuaries, wetlands, floodplains, and swamps, river and lake fronts and productive farms—all are threatened by untimely and, in many cases, purely financially-oriented development. And, unfortunately, unlike air and water pollution, the results of land spoilation are often irreversible; we must live with them for generations and, in some cases, forever.

We need not go through another decade of conflicts like those of the '70's. In my judgment, the '70's was a decade of environmental reaction to the excesses of the Industrial Revolution and the cumulative effects of pollution. The '70's was also a decade of major achievement, with over twenty major pieces of environmental legislation passed at the national level alone. And yet we agonize now over their application as we begin to apply regulations to carry out new laws. But conflict is expensive and time-consuming, and sometimes both sides lose. I hope that we are now at a more mature stage in environmental management, an adult phase. It has taken us almost 75 years

from President Roosevelt's foreboding remarks on natural resources to get here, but new leadership and a new attitude are needed to set our conservation priorities openly and forcefully.

## **Growth and Conservation**

Growth is a reality and we must accommodate it. Home builders will tell you that we must rebuild America in the next 40 years, and we must. There are more people coming; they need homes; the population projection shows that we wouldn't level off at today's growth rate even by the year 2025. Those people must be accommodated. We cannot become no-growth advocates.

The challenge, then, is to protect our rarest natural assets while accommodating quality growth. How do we protect the best of what remains?

I sincerely believe we are coming to the realization that we are all in this together—birders, industrialists, hunters, fishermen, even housewives and gardeners. Whatever our activity, we are interested in conservation and in meeting the demands of growth.

The solutions require an interdisciplinary effort, for the problems are complex and require involvement at all levels of society. Where the conservationists were often weakest in the past was in being too *elitist*.

It might be wise to pause here a moment and define our terms. What is conservation? One of the best definitions I know of was given by a forester in 1947. That forester was Gifford Pinchot, who wrote, "Conservation is the foresighted utilization, preservation, and/or renewal of forests, waters, lands, and minerals, for the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time."<sup>15</sup>

I'm personally convinced that one of the greatest achievements in this new decade will be a complete revolution in how we as Americans view our lands and natural resources—not as commodities, but rather as fragile resources. The days of the “Wild West” in land use are over. There are simply too many people, too many energy demands on our limited resources. Real estate values more and more will be decided by the public rather than by individual landowners, especially if the individual's land use is not in the public's interest.

In the '80's, conservationists must realize that we *cannot harness growth*—we shouldn't try—but we *can channel it*. To do this, conservationists will have to be far better informed. We are in the big leagues now, so lying in front of the bulldozer won't work. We are in a recession, and people need jobs.

I am *convinced* that land conservation and protection of our heritage can be successful in the '80's only to the extent that we recognize the great role of America's private enterprise system and of our unique entrepreneurial system. We must also recognize that haphazard conservation can be *worse* than haphazard development. For both conservation and development, actions must be taken *based on facts* rather than emotions.

We must set priorities on areas to be protected and focus our efforts, rather than trying to save everything in sight. To do so, we need negative incentives, regulations and taxes, via legislation, but we also need positive fiscal incentives to channel growth development.

The problems facing us are truly challenging. Some of the new and more pressing problems include the following:

- 1) The problem of acid rain. Over one-half of our 310 national parks and monuments are threatened by acid rain today. One-half of the lakes above 2000 feet in the Adirondacks are already

biologically sterile, and scientists tell us that the primary cause is acid rain. We have documented negative impacts from acid rain on fisheries, forests, and croplands. What is it? What can be done about it? The Edison Electric Institute, the umbrella institute for all the utilities, is reported to have spent 50 million dollars to start trying to address the problem of acid rain.

- 2) The problem of hazardous wastes. With an estimated 125 billion pounds per year of hazardous wastes being produced by industry, what are the disposal solutions?
- 3) The problem of inholdings in our federal lands, in our parks, refuges, and forests. Do you know we have an over-two-billion-dollar inholding problem, in areas which Congress has authorized but for which Congress has never appropriated the dollars? Congress loves to authorize; it doesn't love to appropriate. This coming fiscal year the appropriations won't even cover the inflationary increase in the back-log.
- 4) The loss to nonagricultural purposes of over 30 million acres of farmland in the last decade. This constitutes an area the size of Vermont, New Jersey, and Delaware *combined*. We are challenged to feed a growing nation, not to mention a world population which, as we are told by experts, will double from today's estimated 4.5 billion to 9 billion in *your* generation.

### **A New Resources Ethic**

What is needed?

An *ethic*—an attitude that, regardless of profession, these problems require our interdisciplinary efforts for solutions, an ethic that recognizes the outdoors as part of

our heritage, that we are part of it. I believe we must have less engineering ingenuity and a little more *humility* in dealing with nature, and certainly a far better understanding of natural systems.

Aldo Leopold in 1948 told us in his beautiful writings that "Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land. By land is meant all of the things on, over, or in the earth. Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left. . . ."6

He went on to say, "The outstanding scientific discovery of the twentieth century is not television, or radio, but rather the complexity of the land organism. Only those who know the most about it can appreciate how little we know about it. The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: 'What good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering."7

### ***The Free Works of Nature***

One of the real breakthroughs must be a whole new focus on the *free* works of nature. What are clean air and water worth to us? What is a flock of geese at sunset worth to us in terms of spiritual renewal?

Wilderness to me is a state of mind. It is the tonic we all must have in our daily lives to restore our physical and spiritual well-being. I have experienced it in places as small as a cave in West Virginia, or on a 10-acre island off the Virginia coast, and in many, many other small natural areas. These small public and pristine natural areas can be, in their own way and in the number of people they serve, as important as Yosemite. For in many ways, the best way

to preserve wilderness is to preserve more urban open space to reduce the people pressures, which I assure you will only increase in the years to come.

We need a far broader understanding of the economics of resource allocation. We have treated clean air and water as free goods. Today we must apply external economics to learn the value of nature, as we have failed to do in the past, applying prices only to man-made goods. A recent example of such an application is the salt marshes of the South.

Ecologists and economists at the University of Georgia and Louisiana State University have documented that one acre of salt marsh at capitalized value is worth 84 thousand dollars to the public, based upon the free works an acre of marsh does for society as a nursery ground, a buffer against floods and erosion, even as a natural sewage treatment system. *One* acre of marsh can produce up to 10 tons of nutrients per year, vs. two to three tons from a wheat-field heavily worked with modern equipment.

Yes, we are governed by the price system, and a great deal more work needs to be done in terms of applying dollar values in our traditional approaches to natural systems.

The fundamental economic aim of our environmental effort in the '80's must be to *improve the quality of growth in this country*. To do this, we must, of course, encourage the reduction or recovery of the enormous waste of energy and other resources within our economy—waste that, in large measure, represents economic as well as environmental costs. To the degree that clean air and water, and indeed land itself, have become increasingly scarce and costly goods and that energy and other materials, whose extraction, production, and consumption generate the pollution we are trying to clean up, have themselves become increasingly scarce and costly, it makes both

*environmental* and *economic* sense to make the conservation of energy and the reduction or recovery of waste a matter of the highest priority.

Aldo Leopold warned time and again that we must embrace what he termed a "simple land ethic." He cautioned that we must stop thinking about land-use solely as an economic problem. He urged that we examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. "A thing is right," Leopold said, "when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. *It is wrong when it tends otherwise!*"

For the '80's, the environmental field has tremendous needs which require your involvement. Sometimes I think we need an environmental Peace Corps. Sometimes I think that environmental ecology should be like reading, writing, and arithmetic and become the fourth element in our school systems. We need common-sense solutions that work with the free enterprise system. We need a far better, broader public awareness of a new land ethic, where we view land as a precious resource, not as a commodity. We need to see ourselves as custodians, not as consumers, of land. We need to put conservation first, not last, in our land-use decisions.

### ***Needs in the Eighties***

Obviously, we must maintain our regulatory achievements, but we must also make them far more efficient. This presents a magnificent challenge for the legal profession. We must have far better coordination of effort and interchange of ideas between the 11,000 conservation/environmental groups now in existence. We must have a buy-out of the 2 billion dollar back-log in authorized federal parks, refuges, and national forests. We must realize that haphazard conservation can be worse than haphazard develop-

ment. We must all come to the realization that we need to apply economics to conservation efforts.

The key is relatively simple: determine where *not* to build, first by making inventories of our best natural areas and then by channeling growth on areas with adequate carrying capacity.

The Nature Conservancy has inventories underway in 25 states, listing the very best habitats and critical resource areas. Many of these inventories are paid for by industry—the petroleum industry in New Mexico, the timber industry in Minnesota, the utility industry in Indiana, and so on. In each case, industry is saying, “Give us the facts on where these critical areas are, in advance, before we make new investments. We don’t want to go to court after we’ve begun construction; we have a responsibility to our stockholders.”

I have had the pleasure of working with corporations both in fund raising and in acquiring land. To date, The Nature Conservancy has acquired over 200 tracts of land from corporations. And I have been accused, by some groups, of accepting tainted money. The first time I was accused of accepting tainted money, I thought about it for a few seconds, then passed along Mark Twain’s comment: “It may be tainted money, but it taint enough.”

Last year, 43 billion dollars were given away in America: 90 percent from individuals, 5 percent from corporations, and 5 percent from foundations. Any of you who are going to be in fund raising should learn the facts: corporations, for the fourth time last year, gave away more money than foundations. I believe that trend will continue through the decade of the ’80’s, into the ’90’s, and on *ad infinitum*.

Corporations have come to the realization that while their average giving is less than 1 percent of their taxable earnings—and they are encouraged to give away up to 5



percent—they have an obligation to society and social responsibility. Many corporations are now actively seeking ways to contribute funds to projects which seek to balance economic growth and conservation needs. It's a tremendous opportunity, in my judgment, to sit across the table and try to work out common problems with solutions based upon facts.

I am optimistic about the future of our natural heritage, in spite of all the problems and challenges. What gives me my optimism is nature's resilience. Dr. Rene Dubos, a prominent microbiologist at Rockefeller University, has spoken of the marvels of nature's ability to cleanse herself if left free from contamination. For example, he said that if we would leave the Hudson River alone, free of contamination for 6 or 7 years, it would restore itself almost to its original condition. We could swim in it, fish in it, etc. It could be enjoyed as a common resource for the 8 million plus people of New York City.

Perhaps Theodore Roosevelt said it best when viewing the Grand Canyon for the first time: "Leave it as it is, mankind cannot improve it—he can only mar it."

I believe the next 20 years will be as different from today in terms of energy as we today are from when we became a nation some 200 years ago. The solutions, however, must come from *you*, not from Washington, D.C. As Randy Meyer, President of Exxon, said, "America owes its success not so much to physical resources as to the resourcefulness of [its] people."<sup>8</sup>

I am convinced that individual initiative, if properly guided and motivated, holds the key to solving our resource problems, for the free enterprise system is still the greatest motivator in the world. We need a judicious blend of planning and profit motivation to solve our natural resource problems, for history gives ample warnings to a civilization that ignores the wise use of its natural resources.

We are all blessed by a magnificent natural heritage, a heritage which today is threatened as never before by mankind itself with its unquenchable thirst for growth and energy. I sincerely believe that at *no time* in the history of our nation have there been more compelling reasons for your meaningful involvement in the environmental life and times of our nation. We are truly at an environmental crossroads that over the next 20 years will, I believe, determine whether future civilizations will praise our foresight or curse our blindness for the world they will inherit.

In any cause, and particularly in environmental or conservation causes in this country, you will find that 1 percent makes things happen, 9 percent watches things happen, and 90 percent says, "What happened?" I hope that each of you in this audience will be part of the 1 percent that makes things happen. The challenge is yours, the initiative is yours, the *obligation* to get involved is yours. Thank you.





## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Charles L. Osenbaugh, Press Conference at Annual Meeting of Society of Real Estate Appraisers for 1979, Reno, Nevada.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Seymour, "Outlook for Appraising in the 1980's," *Appraisal Journal* 48 (April 1980): 166.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

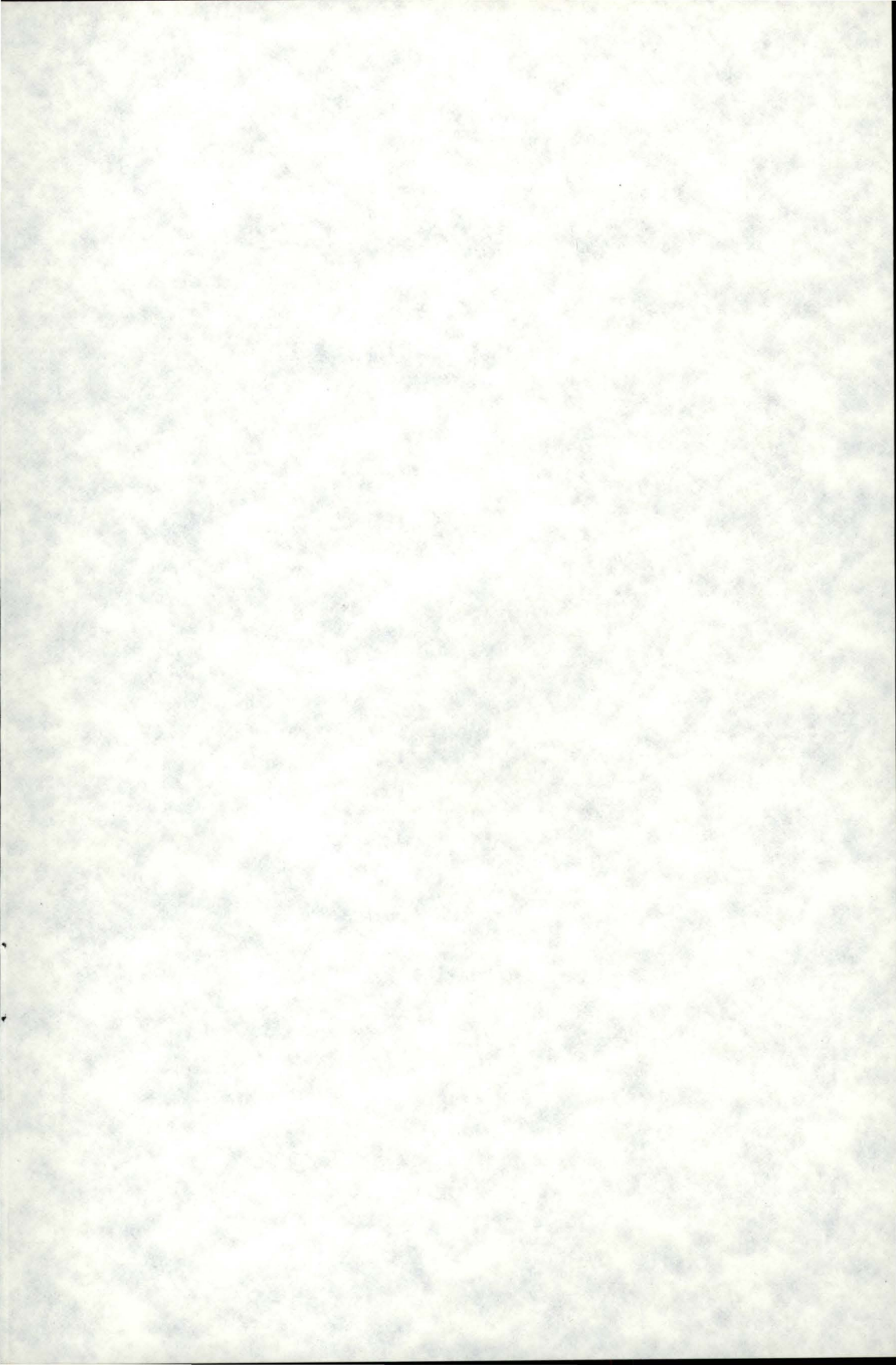
<sup>4</sup> The Honorable Dan W. Lufkin, *The Spoiler's Hand—The Rage of Gain: Social, Political, and Environmental Considerations of Land Use* (Princeton: The Newcomen Society in North America, 1974), p. 2.

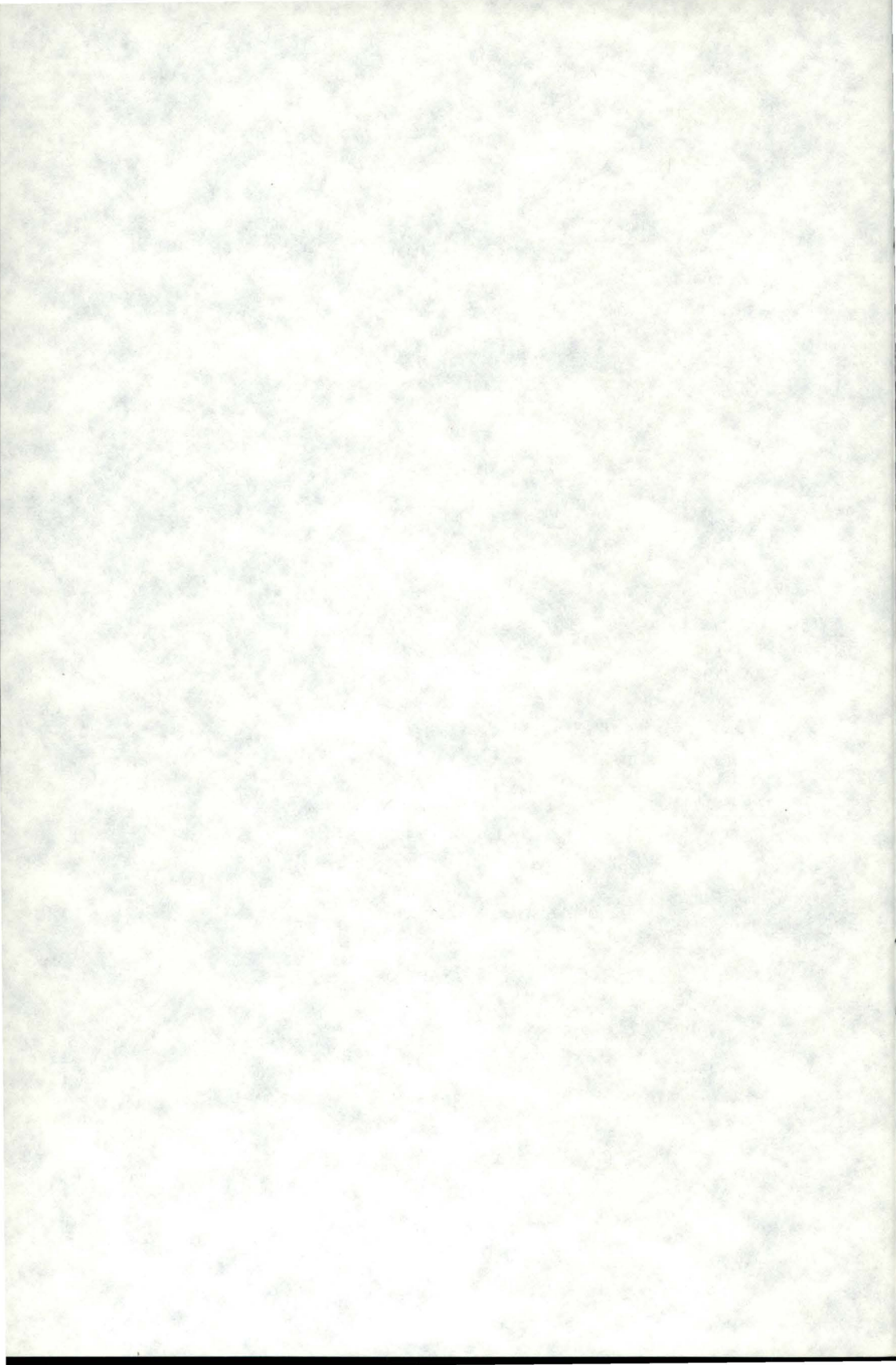
<sup>5</sup> Gifford Pinchot, *Breaking New Ground* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1947), p. 505.

<sup>6</sup> Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 176.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> Randall Meyer, "The Spirit of Achievement," *Sky* (Delta Airlines), July 1976, p. 16.





*The University of Idaho Wilderness Research Center has initiated the Wilderness Resource Distinguished Lecture-ship as an annual event to encourage constructive dialogue and to broaden understanding of the wilderness resource. Speakers are invited on the basis of contributions to the philosophical or scientific rationale of wilderness management.*

*Other activities of the Wilderness Research Center include promotion of sound methods of protective management; stimulation of interdisciplinary research; support of a graduate student assistantship and of summer research projects for undergraduate students; sponsorship of annual field trips for Wildland Recreation Management students; and other similar wilderness-related activities appropriate to the mission of a land grant university.*

*Support for the Center or for its specific projects is welcomed in the form of gifts and bequests. For further information, contact*

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