

Without enough wilderness America will change. Democracy, with its myriad personalities and increasing sophistication, must be fibred and vitalized by the regular contact with outdoor growths--animals, trees, sun warmth and free skies--or it will dwindle and pale.

Walt Whitman  
LIVING WILDERNESS

I conceive that the land belongs to a vast family of which many are dead, few are living, and countless numbers are still unborn.

Greater than an army with banners is an idea whose time has come.

Victor Hugo

Nigerian Chieftan

Some favorite Wilderness Quotations of  
MACK PRICHARD, 615-742-6739  
TENN. CONSERVATION Dept. Nashville, TN.

The West of which I speak is but another name for the Wild, and what I have been preparing to say is, that in WILDERNESS IS THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD. Every tree sends its fibers forth in search of the Wild. The cities import it at any price. Men plow and drill for it. From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind.....  
Henry Thoreau

3887.

Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence. so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from the noise, the exhausts the stinks of human and automotive waste. And so that never again can we have the chance to see ourselves single, separate, vertical and individual in the world, part of the environment of trees and rocks and soil, brother to the other animals, part of the natural world and competent to belong in it.

Wallace Stegner

884.

We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatues, a part of the geography of hope.

America's wilderness and life-giving wilderness on other parts of the planet with which we are concerned, still live to remind us of a truth the poet Robinson Jeffers spoke: "It is only a little planet, but how beautiful it is!" It can also remind us what Dr. J.A. Rush, a physicist, wrote: "When man obliterates wilderness, he repudiates the evolutionary force that put him on this planet. In a deeply terrifying sense man is on his own."

He ought not try to be on his own. He would find such existence a lonely one for the brief period it lasted.

How beautiful a planet it is! How beautiful can it remain? People can make sure that it is everlastingly a good place--people who know about wilderness first-hand or people who learn about it vicariously, and who care.

David Brower  
Sierra Club, San Francisco

610.

Only that people can thrive that loves its land and swears to make it beautiful. For the land,.....is the foundation-element of human life, and if the public relation to that is false, all else is of need false and inverted.

How can a flower deny its own roots, or a tree the soil from which it springs?

And how can a people stand firmly planted under the sun, except as mediators between Earth and Heaven--to dedicate the gracious fruits of the ground to all divine uses?

To render the life of the people clean and gracious.... To make the wild places of the land sacred.... Spring all living creatures as far as possible rather than destroying them.... To do all this in singleness of heart were indeed to open up riches for mankind of which few dream....

The blue sea waits below the girdle of the sun-fringed shores....

And the sunlight wraps the globe of the Earth, and dances and twinkles in the ether of the human heart, Which is indeed a great and boundless ocean, in which all things float suspended.

Edward Carpenter  
from TOWARD DEMOCRACY

859.

A village, even like Concord, would stagnate if not for the unexplored forests and meadows which surround it. We need the tonic of wildness. Each town should have as well as a school house, a park or rather a primitive forest, of 500 or a 1000 acres where a stick should never be cut for fuel, a common possession forever, for instruction and recreation.

Henry David Thoreau, 1856

For there are some people who can live without wild things about them and the earth beneath their feet, and some who cannot. To those of us who, in a city, are always aware of the abused and abased earth below the pavement, walking on grass, watching the flight of birds, or finding the first spring dandelion are rights as old and unalienable as the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We belong to no cult. We are not Nature Lovers. We don't love nature any more than we love breathing. Nature is simply something indispensable, like air and light and water, that we accept as necessary to living, and the nearer we can get to it the happier we are.

Louise Dickenson Rich

612

Man always kills the thing he loves, and so we the pioneers have killed our wilderness. Some say we had to. Be that as it may, I am glad I shall never be young without wild country to be young in. Of what avail are forty freedoms without a blank spot on the map?

The disquieting thing in the modern picture is the trophy-hunter who never grows up, in whom the capacity for isolation, perception, and husbandry is undeveloped, or perhaps lost . . . .

To enjoy he must possess, invade, appropriate. Hence the wilderness that he cannot personally see has no value to him. Hence the universal assumption that an unused hinterland is rendering no service to society. Those devoid of imagination, a blank place on the map is a useless waste; to others, the most valuable part. (Is my share in Alaska worthless to me because I shall never go there? Do I need a road to show me the arctic prairies, the goose pastures of the Yukon the Kodiak bear, the sheep meadows behind McKinley?)

It would appear, in short, that the rudimentary grades of outdoor recreation consume their resource base; the higher grades, at least to a degree, create their own satisfaction with little or no attrition of land or life. . . . Recreational development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of bulding receptivity into the still unlovely human mind.

Aldo Leopold  
SAND COUNTY ALMANAC

674-

And as we lengthen and elaborate the chain of technology that intervenes between us and the natural world, we forget that we become steadily more vulnerable to even the slightest failure in that chain.

The time has long since passed when a citizen can function responsibly without a broad understanding of the living landscape of which he is inseparably a part.  
Paul B. Sears.

875-

... The need is not really for more brains, the need is now for a gentler, a more tolerant people than those who won for us against the ice, the tiger, and the bear. The hand that hefted the ax, out of some old blind allegiance to the past, fondles the machine gun as lovingly. It is a habit man will have to break to survive, but the roots go very deep.

Loren Eiseley

B. The real significance of wilderness is a cultural matter. It is far more than hunting, fishing; hiking, camping, or canoeing; it has to do with the human spirit.

Sigurd F. Olson  
THE SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF WILDERNESS



958. "For me, and for thousands with similar inclinations the most important passion of life is the overpowering desire to escape periodically from the clutches of a mechanistic civilization. To us the enjoyment of solitude, complete independence, and the beauty of undefiled panoramas is absolutely essential to happiness."

Bob Marshall  
1901-1939

All grownups can do for youth is to protect it from irrevocable decisions.

Louis Auchincloss' PORTRAIT II  
BROWNSTONE (Houghton)

There are mountains in Attica which can now keep nothing but bees, but which were clothed, not so very long ago, with . . . timber suitable for roofing the very large buildings. . . boundless pasture for cattle. The annual supply of rainfall was not lost, as it is at present, through being allowed to flow over the denuded surface to the sea. . .

Plato

618

All places are now accessible. . . all open to commerce cultivated fields have subdued forests; flocks and herds have expelled wild beasts. . . Sandy deserts are sown, marshes are drained, rocks are planted. . . Everywhere are houses, and inhabitants, and settled governments, and civilized life. What most frequently meets the view is our teeming population; our numbers are burdensome to the world. . . our wants grow more and more keen, and our complaints bitter in all mouths, whilst nature fails in affording us her usual sustenance. In very deed, pestilence, and famine, and wars, and earthquakes have to be regarded as remedy for nations, as means of pruning the luxuriance of the human race.

Tertullian

619

How little, from the resources unrenowned by Man, cost the things of greatest value— wild beauty, peace, health, and love, Music and all testaments of spirit! How simple our basic needs— a little food, sun, air, water, shelter, warmth and sleep! How lightly might this earth bear Man forever.

Of all resources, the most crucial is Man's spirit. Not dulled, nor lulled, supine, secure, replete, does Man create. But out of stern challenge, in sharp excitement, with a burning joy. Man is the hunter still, though his quarry be a hope, a mystery a dream.

From what immortal hungers, what sudden sight of the unknown, surges that desire? What flint of fact, what kindling light of art or far horizon, ignites that spark? What cry, what music, what strange beauty, strikes that resonance? On these hangs the future of the world.

Were all learning lost, all music stilled, Man, if these resources still remained to him, could again hear singing in himself and rebuild anew the habitations of his thought.

Nancy Newhall  
from This is the American Earth

more

339.

The demagogues... Who have already caused the death of several civilizations, harass men so that they will not reflect; manage to keep them herded together in crowds so that they cannot reconstruct their individuality in the one place where it can be reconstructed, which is in solitude.

--Ortega y Gasset

"Wherever man has been the longest, there you find a desert waste and the beds of dried up rivers.

Ding Darling

A world from which solitude is extirpated is a very poor ideal. . . Nor is there much satisfaction in contemplating the world with nothing left to the spontaneous activity of nature.

John Stuart Mill

The wisest, the most enlightened, the most remotely long-seeing exploitation of resources is not enough for the simple reason that the whole concept of exploitation is so false and so limited that in the end it will defeat itself and the earth will have been plundered no matter how scientifically and far-seeingly the plundering has been done.

Every day the science of ecology is making clearer the factual aspect as it demonstrates those more and more remote interdependencies, which, no matter how remote they are, are crucial even for us.

Joseph Wood Krutch

It is legitimate to hope that there may be left. . . the special kind of human mark, the special record of human passage, that distinguishes man from all other species. It is rare enough among men, impossible to any other form of life. IT IS SIMPLY THE DELIBERATE AND CHOSEN REFUSAL TO MAKE ANY MARKS AT ALL. Sometimes we have withheld our power to destroy, and have left a threatened species like the buffalo, a threatened beauty spot like Yosemite or Yellowstone or Dinosaur, scrupulously alone. We are the most dangerous species of life on the planet, and every other species, even the earth itself, has cause to fear our power to exterminate. But we are also the only species which, when it chooses to do so, will go to great effort to save what it might destroy.

It is a better world with some buffalo left in it, a richer world with some gorgeous canyons unmarred by signboards, hot-dog stands, super highways, or high-tension lines, undrowned by power or irrigation reservoirs. If we preserved as parks only those places that have no economic possibilities, we would have no parks. And in the decades to come, it will not be only the buffalo and the trumpeter swan who need sanctuaries. Our own species is going to need them too.

It needs them now.

Wallace Stegner  
The Wilderness Society

# WILDERNESS QUOTATIONS

SOME FAVORITES OF  
MACK PRICHARD  
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The whole land is made desolate because no man layeth it to heart!

Jeremiah

616

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.

Isaiah 5-v.8

As we unravel the wilderness of nature, we build within our cities an equally complex wilderness of man.

from The New Exploration  
by Benton McKaye, author of The Wilderness

A two-fold national problem is how to preserve the wilderness in the country and get rid of the jungle in the cities.

--Bill Vaughn, Reader's Digest

Let us go back a moment to the initial problem: the space available in the national parks is not big enough for all who want to use it. But the size of a park is directly related to the manner in which you use it. If you are in a canoe traveling at three miles an hour, the lake on which you are paddling is ten times as long and ten times as broad as it is to the man in a speedboat going thirty. An hour's paddle will take you as far away as an hour in a speedboat—if there are no speedboats. In other words, more people can use the same space with the same results. . . every road that replaces a footpath, every outboard motor that replaces a canoe paddle, shrinks the area of the park.

Paul Brooks