

ALDO LEOPOLD'S PLEA FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL
EXIGENCE: A STUDY IN THE RHETORIC
OF PRESERVATIONISM

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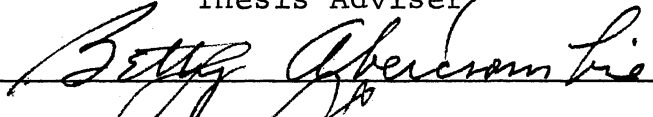



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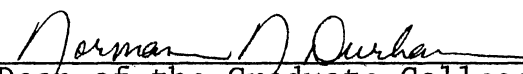


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of the wilderness supplies a unique need in recreation, unfortunately, it is a need that must be met by foresight. Once destroyed, it cannot be re-created. "Wilderness" is the one kind of playground which mankind cannot build to order.¹

The general guidelines for action which Aldo Leopold advocated with regard to "wilderness preservation" and "forest recreation" are made crystal clear by these statements:

Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.

. . . wilderness is a resource, not only in the physical sense of the raw material it contains, but also in the sense of a distinctive environment which may, if rightly used, yield certain social values.²

Aldo Leopold, the father of modern game management and promoter of wilderness preservation for its recreational and aesthetic values, published versions of writing in articles during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. His system of environmental ethics found maturity in his best-known publication, A Sand County Almanac. Published posthumously in 1949, this work stands with the writings of Gifford Pinchot, Henry David

Thoreau, and John Muir. It became, in many respects, the bible of the onrushing environmental movement of the 1960s and early 1970s.

The American Preservation movement, or the movement to set aside areas of natural scenery or wilderness for preservation, appreciation, and enjoyment, is one of the oldest and most visible chapters of modern-day environmentalism. To be sure, Aldo Leopold was a preeminent figure of the preservation of the wilderness. By "wilderness" Leopold meant

. . . a continuous stretch of country preserved in its natural state, open to lawful hunting and fishing, big enough to absorb a two weeks' pack trip, and kept devoid of roads, artificial trails, cottages, or other works of man.³

Leopold observed that

. . . recreational development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind. . . . all history consists of successive excursions from a single starting-point, to which man returns again and again to organize yet another search for a durable scale of values.⁴

Regardless of his ultimate impact upon preservation of the wilderness, Leopold first tried to suggest certain policies for meeting and initiating wilderness preservation. Leopold chose to elicit public support for preserving the wilds, using pleas which took the form of literary essays rather than persuasive discourses. As Errington put it, Leopold's writings "were more than a statement or plea; it was both solidly informative and [a] literary contribution."⁵ Errington suggested that Leopold's prominence

in prescribing wilderness in National Forests subsequently led to the U.S. Forest Service designating a total of 14,000,000 acres as such areas, which are looked upon as being evidence of Leopold's influence on the American scene.⁶ Leopold's writings of more than a quarter-century ago are still nourishing movements for wilderness preservation here and abroad.

To account for Leopold's highly influential style, one must examine his writings as a whole. Leopold promoted two avenues for his readers; first, he illustrated a crusade against politics in conservation; and second he highlighted the misuses of resources in our forest recreational policy.

Leopold's works surveyed the years from 1916 through 1948. His early publications highlighted game management and ornithological notes. The latter part of his works illustrated his views on wilderness protection and forest recreation. In his publication, "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy," Leopold wrote:

Very evidently we . . . have the old conflict between preservation and use, long since an issue with respect to timber, water power, and other purely economic resources, but just now coming to be an issue with respect to recreation.⁷

Throughout the rhetorical device of wilderness preservation, Leopold provided his readers with a sense of understanding the issues of wilderness preservation and discursively highlighting certain policies for meeting it. By 1948, after his death, his second task of associating misuses of resources in our forests can be seen in his acclaimed work,

A Sand County Almanac.

There have been no previous rhetorical-critical studies completed on the writing of literary essays of Aldo Leopold and, presumably, no other study is in progress. Perhaps such a study by a promoter of wilderness preservation could contribute to an understanding of contemporary forest recreational policy.

This study will focus on assessing the influence which Aldo Leopold's literary essays had on wilderness preservation as it related to the wilderness policy in the United States during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Specific concentration shall be given to the literary essays that Leopold wrote to elicit (in order to gain) public support for particular issues, rather than studying his persuasive discourses.

It is the major hypothesis of this study that Aldo Leopold's rhetoric of preservationism elicited public support for preserving the wilderness and subsequently led to the designation of numerous acreage as wilderness lands.

An extensive study and review of literature revealed that limited historical/critical research has been completed on Leopold's literary influence. This apparent lack of research increased the significance of this study. The review of literature in the study covered four areas. Biographical studies were used to understand the ideas, arguments, and motives of the writer. Historical background information was used in order to include the rationale for the contemporary philosophy of wilderness preservation.

Writings of authors on the literary essays by Aldo Leopold as they pertain to wilderness preservation were also used. Finally, the Leopold Papers from the University of Wisconsin State Historical Society were also used.

The data contained in this dissertation were selected from two types of source material. First were primary sources, those being the material of historic research through which the events of the past can be directly examined. The collection of literary essays by Leopold as found in the University of Wisconsin State Archives, as well as the Library of Congress illustrate this type of source material. Secondary sources will provide information of an interpretive nature generally articulated by the writers who have not had any direct relationship with past events or conditions. Contemporary information related to the study will also serve as secondary source material.

This study and appraisal will develop the theory that Leopold's rhetoric of preservationism paved the way for wilderness preservation in America today.

The term "disposition" refers to an analysis of the structure of the essay. Disposition covers the concept of arrangement and orderly planning and movement of the whole idea, and of proportioning the parts of the essay. The specific criteria in analyzing the arrangement of arguments within the essays to be analyzed are: (1) the arrangement of the ideas presented; (2) reasons for such an arrangement; and (3) the emergence of a central theme.⁸ These three

components that categorize the structure of literary essays will be analyzed critically in an attempt to determine their effectiveness in Leopold's writings. Style refers to the language or choice of words found in the essay. This study will analyze four characteristics of style: correctness, clearness, appropriateness, and embellishment. The specific criteria to judge style will be: (1) Was the language correct, clear, and appropriate? (2) Was the language embellished with any stylistic devices that added impressiveness and vividness?⁹

The Preservation Movement, or more specifically, the movement supporting the withholding of public lands, forests, water, and wildlife in reserve for their scenic, recreational, and inherent values, may be traced back to the writings of Pinchot^x and Muir. Leopold's rhetoric of preservationism is a type of literary writing that highlights the way in which he chose to elicit public support. By rhetoric, the author suggests that "rhetoric is the conscious orchestration of symbols (verbal, visual, vocal) in the process of adjusting people to ideas and ideas to people."

END NOTES

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aldo Leopold, wildlife ecologist and environmental philosopher, was born in Burlington, Iowa, on January 11, 1886. He entered the United States Forest Service in 1909 as a forest assistant in Arizona; was promoted in 1911 to deputy forest supervisor, and in 1912 to supervisor of the Carson National Forest in New Mexico. By 1917 he became assistant district forester for operations of the Southwestern District. A pioneer in wilderness preservation, he interested other foresters in wilderness ecology and recommended the establishment of the Gila Wilderness Area in New Mexico, the first national-forest wilderness system. From 1925 to 1927, Leopold was associate director of the Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. Upon leaving government service in 1928, he became game consultant for the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute.¹ His findings on game management were reported and published as "Report on Game Survey of the North Central States."²

During a year of private practice as a consulting forester, he completed his book Game Management, 1933, and was then appointed professor of game management at the

University of Wisconsin. This chair was created for him, and he held it until his death in 1948. During his lifetime, Leopold served on the Council of the Society of American Foresters, 1927-31, and was associate editor of the Journal of Forestry, 1936-47. At various times he was a director of the National Audubon Society and vice president of the American Forestry Association. One of the organizers of the Wilderness Society in 1937, he also served as its president in 1939. President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him a member of the Special Committee on Wild Life Restoration in 1934. His best known book, A Sand County Almanac, was published posthumously in 1949. The Aldo Leopold Memorial Medal, established in his honor by the Wildlife Society, has been awarded annually since 1950. Although Leopold had no religious affiliation, many people regard his "Rhetoric of Preservationism" as a religious act of "towering importance to the future of life on earth."³

Critic's Writings on Leopold's Rhetoric of Preservationism

According to Clay Schoenfeld, Aldo Leopold "has become an authentic patron saint of the modern environmental movement, and A Sand County Almanac is one of its new testament gospels."⁴ Many of Leopold's essays were initiated as convention speeches or poems. The man's sense of vision was positively astute. Schoenfeld wrote, "The Land Ethic, did not enter the ken of the general public until the publication

of a paperback Sand County in 1966, that seminal essay had actually appeared in truncated form as early as 1933 in the Journal of Forestry."⁵

Boyd Gibbons suggested that Aldo Leopold elevated "ecology to philosophy and literature."⁶ Hawkins stated that: "Leopold was convinced that the intangibles of outdoor recreation far outweighed the tangibles." Characteristic of Leopold's writing is the following:

A system of conservation based solely on economic self-interest is hopelessly lopsided. It tends to ignore, and thus eventually to eliminate, many elements that lack commercial value, but that are essential to healthy living. It assumes . . . that the economic parts of the biotic clock will function without the uneconomic parts.⁷

When the movement to preserve the country's scenic resources was started by a group of early conservationists, Leopold was right in its forefront. Clepper suggested that ". . . Aldo Leopold's name brings to mind not only wildlife management but wilderness as well."⁸ Furthermore, Gilligan stated that, "It is Leopold who has been characterized as the 'Father of the National Forest Wilderness System'."⁹

In viewing wilderness preservation and looking at the underpinnings which support Leopold's impact, Allin stated that Leopold's interest in wilderness preservation was a by-product of his persistent concern and interest in wildlife. He believed that to preserve the fish and game habitat effectively, one must ultimately preserve wilderness.¹⁰ Allin went on to say:

The first National Conference on Outdoor Recreation convened in May 1924. If there

was a logical forum for the discussion of wilderness preservation, surely this was it. Nevertheless, in three days of discussion the conference never touched on the subject of wilderness recreation. The failure to deal with the wilderness question distressed Leopold who continued to try to mobilize the public with magazine articles like "The Last Stand of the Wilderness".¹¹

One may support the assertion that Aldo Leopold's literary essays had an impact on wilderness preservation policy, by citing that the 1928 National Conference on Outdoor Recreation in its chapter on "Recreation Resources of Federal Lands" devoted its entirety to the national forests and fully half of that chapter to the values of wilderness recreation. The Report quoted extensively and approvingly from Aldo Leopold's "The Last Stand of the Wilderness."¹²

Advocates of wilderness preservation, Aldo Leopold, Arthur Carhart, and Robert Marshall, supported by new organizations like the Wilderness Society and the Izaak Walton League, helped pave the way for development and policy. In 1921, Leopold wrote an article for the Journal of Forestry with the objective of giving a definite form to the issue of wilderness. This Journal of Forestry article provided the stimulus for action in regard to wilderness preservation. Early in 1922, Frank W. Pooler, the District Forester, instructed Leopold to study the possibilities of wilderness preservation in the Gila. Leopold, upon reviewing the situation, worked out a policy for protecting the Gila. Local sportsmen's associations put their weight behind the

proposal, and on June 3, 1924, Pooler designated 574,000 acres as devoted primarily to wilderness recreation.¹³

Relating to outdoor recreation concerns, Schoenfeld wrote about Leopold, "Leopold would recognize the modern wilderness acts as perhaps inevitable extension of his pioneer paper on wilderness conservation."¹⁴ He went on to say:

But he would sense their Archilles heel lies in the fact that they literally advertise classified areas as something special, thereby attracting abnormal pressures in the principal form of recreationists of various stripe, all bent on savoring the last strands of primeval America. As he wrote in Bird-Lore in 1938, 'The very scarcity of wild places, reacting with the mores of advertising and promotion, tends to defeat any deliberate effort to prevent their growing still more scarce.' Without question, however, the Nature Conservancy and its philosophy of vest-pocket sanctuaries would have been appealing to Leopold.¹⁵

Impacting current wilderness policy, Schoenfeld wrote:

. . . the National Environmental Policy Act indeed became in a sense the institutionalization of Leopold's own dictum that a 'thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community'.¹⁶

Gilbert wrote: "Aldo Leopold conceived his essay 'The Land Ethic,' as being nothing more than a piece of philosophy on ecology."¹⁷ Meine wrote:

Students study it. Journalists quote it. Environmentalists live by it. Supreme Court judges cite it. Critics respond to it. . . . It may or may not be the cornerstone of the environmental movement, but it is certainly an important part of the foundation.¹⁸

Nash stated that the importance of Leopold's philosophy even filtered into President Richard M. Nixon's speeches.

In his February 9, 1972, environmental message to Congress, Nixon attributed to the wilderness concept and wildlife "a higher right to exist - not granted them by man and not his to take away."¹⁹ Nash wrote that had Leopold lived he would have been very much encouraged by the slow penetration of the ethics of the environment into the thinking of modern day America. He felt that there were still miles to man-environment relations based on ethics rather than economics. Secretary of the Interior, in 1963, Stewart L. Udall, declared:

If asked to select a single volume, which contains a . . . plea for a new land ethic, most of us here at the Interior would vote for Aldo Leopold's A Sand County Almanac.²⁰

Gibbons stated that Leopold orchestrated the future of the natural world - what he called the land, and what we now call environment - to man's conscience. From someone with a less rigorous intellect, Leopold's "land ethic" might have fluttered into preciousness or preaching. But he was neither precious nor a preacher. His message - the keel of his thinking - was not a call to worship, but rather a gentle plea for self-inquiry.²¹

Jacobs stated that "Leopold wrote eloquently on this point as well as on environmental education, explaining patiently the complexities of ecological balance."²²

According to a 1963 Forest Service pamphlet, for example, "nearly 40 years ago" the Forest Service pioneered in preserving America's wilderness heritage "led by Aldo Leopold."²³ Baldwin went on to highlight the assumptions of

conservationists concerned with the wilderness concept and forest recreation.

. . . a 1940 publication of the Wilderness Society likewise traced wilderness areas from 'their formal beginning in the mind and on the pen point of Aldo Leopold to the achievement by Robert Marshall of a practical new wilderness system in the National Forests'.²⁴

Moreover, Broome stated: "Unquestionably, Aldo Leopold was the Jeremiah of Wilderness thinking."²⁵ Bob Marshall called Leopold:

. . . the commanding general of the wilderness battle and his early articulation of the wilderness idea, most notably in his 1925 essay on 'Wilderness as a Form of Land Use,' may thus be viewed as milestones along his route to a land ethic.²⁶

Flader suggested that Leopold proposed and argued for wilderness preservation on the principle of "highest use," forerunner to the doctrine of "multiple use" as a fundamental policy governing administration of the national forests.²⁷ As Leopold wrote: "Highest use is a very varied use," and he goes on to state that its use ought to provide for the needs and desires of the minority who favored wilderness recreation as well as for other forest uses and users.²⁸

According to Fleming, "Leopold's true animus in citing ecological considerations was to bolster an ultimately aesthetic protest against anything that diminished the richness and variety of the world."²⁹ Leopold's conviction regarding the need to set aside wilderness areas grew initially out of his work in recreational planning, according

to Flader.

He was charged with coordinating planning activities in the national forests of the Southwest under an act of March 4, 1915, that authorized the leasing of sites in the forests for summer homes and commercial recreational establishments.³⁰

This was the first statute that recognized recreation as a legitimate use of the forests.

Aldo Leopold's Writings on Wilderness Preservation

A preliminary bibliography of Leopold's writings, containing over three hundred entries, appeared in the Wildlife Research Newsletter No. 35 published by the Department of Wildlife Management of the University of Wisconsin.

Flader suggested that:

A Sand Country Almanac, represents the distillation of a lifetime of observation and reflection on the interrelationships of ecology, esthetics, and ethics. Through it Aldo Leopold speaks to the present generation as he will to the future.³¹

Leopold's message, according to Gibbons, was not a call of worship, but rather a gentle plea for self-inquiry.³² This can be seen in the following statement.

There is as yet no ethic dealing with man's relations to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it. . . . The land relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges but not obligations. . . . Obligations have no meaning without conscience, and the problem we face is the extension of the social conscience from people to land. No important change in ethics was ever accomplished without an internal change in our intellectual emphasis, loyalties, affections, and convictions. The proof that conservation has not

yet touched these foundations of conduct lies in the fact that philosophy and religion have not yet heard of it. In our attempt to make conservation easy, we have made it trivial.³³

Leopold articulated his own position in an article in the Journal of Forestry, "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy." It was in this early essay that he gave a definite form to the wilderness issue by giving it definition.³⁴ He also spoke of its future:

So also must we recognize that any number of small patches of uninhabited woods or mountains are no answer to the real sportsman's need for wilderness, and the day will come when we must admit that his special needs likewise must be taken care of in proportion to his numbers and importance. And as in forestry, it will be much easier and cheaper to preserve, by forethought, what he needs, than to create it after it is gone.³⁵

In a plea for preserving a few primitive forests, untouched by motor cars and tourist camps, where those who enjoy canoe or pack trips in wild country may fulfill their dreams, Leopold wrote in his essay "The Last Stand of the Wilderness,"

This has been true of the latest natural resource to be discovered, namely the group of things collectively called Outdoor Recreation. We had to develop tenements and tired business-men before Outdoor Recreation was recognized as a category of human needs, though the use of the outdoors for recreational purposes is as old as the race itself.³⁶

Leopold went on to write that we need a national policy on Outdoor Recreation. Allin suggested that Leopold continued to try to mobilize the public with essays like "The Last Stand of the Wilderness." Due to the exigence at the time, Leopold wrote this salient essay to stress outdoor recreation

policy.³⁷

Finally, in 1925, Leopold wrote an essay titled, "Wilderness as a Form of Land Use." In this essay he presented a broad-gauged analysis of the wilderness idea in the context of American cultural values. He wrote:

The first idea that wilderness is a resource, not only in the physical sense of the raw materials it contains, but also in the sense of a distinctive environment which may, if rightly used, yield certain social values.

The second idea is that the value of wilderness varies enormously with location. As with other resources, it is impossible to dissociate value from location.

The third idea is that wilderness, in the sense of an environment as distinguished from a quantity of physical materials, lies somewhere between the class of nonreproducible resources like forests.³⁸

"Wilderness as a Form of Land Use" was very influential in that Benton MacKaye drew on it in his book The New Exploration: A Philosophy of Regional Planning (1928), calling the essay "one of the very few contributions thus far to the psychology of regional planning."³⁹ Ecologist C. C. Adams drew from Leopold's article, as did economists Richard T. Ely and George Wehrwein, among others. Leopold himself spoke of his essay the following year at the Second National Conference on Outdoor Recreation, where he sought to place wilderness preservation and outdoor recreation on the national scene.⁴⁰

In the "Conservation Ethic" Leopold highlighted his notions of the Land Ethic.

The gradual extension of ethical criteria to economic relationships is an historical fact. Economic criteria did not suffice to adjust men to society; they do not now suffice to adjust society to its environment. If our present evolutionary impetus is an upward one, it is ecologically probable that ethics will eventually be extended to land. The present conservation movement may constitute the beginnings of such an extension. If and when it takes place, it may radically modify what now appear as insuperable economic obstacles to better land-use.⁴¹

"Barring love and war," is the beginning of Leopold's essay on "Conservation Esthetic." It highlights his notions on the avocation of outdoor recreation. Leopold wrote:

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 satisfactions with little or no attrition of land or life. It is the expansion of transport without a corresponding growth of perception which threatens us with qualitative bankruptcy of the recreational process. Recreational development is a job.⁴²

Nash wrote that Leopold regarded the preservation of the wild country as an act of national contrition, on the part of a people who had been so careless in the past. He believed Leopold stressed that "the richest values of wilderness lie not in the days of Daniel Boone, nor even in the present, but rather the future."⁴³

Summed up best by Leopold regarding the capstone for wilderness preservation and forest recreation, Leopold wrote: "A land ethic, or ecological conscience, reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land."⁴⁴

It applied to our interactions with all the land, not

just with the wilderness. But it was also a starting point, ecologically and culturally for the norm of health in the system, and through all his life^{he?} remained committed to its preservation. He believed that the "raw wilderness gives definition and meaning to the human enterprise."⁴⁵

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⁹Craig W. Allin, The Politics of Wilderness Preservation (Connecticut, 1982), p. 70.

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¹²Ibid., p. 73.

¹³Roderick Nash, The American Environment (Massachusetts, 1976), p. 187.

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CHAPTER III

RHETORIC OF PRESERVATIONISM

Since John Muir, no one had succeeded in forging the concern for wilderness preservation into more effective appeals to a national public than Aldo Leopold. Little of Leopold's life explains his eventual development from researcher to outspoken wilderness preservationist. His concern for preservation was at the forefront with his feelings about writing. Leopold chose to write essays on wilderness preservation, a form that determined his range of subject matter, his potential audience, and the thrust of his later appeals. Essays of wilderness preservation were generally short descriptions of natural phenomena, often from a personal perspective, which also touch upon such topics as the literary and artistic appreciation of scenery. These topics found essence in journals that professional colleagues would read. Therefore, where the interest was first in need of generation, Leopold wrote. Consequently, by choosing the literary form of the essay of wilderness preservation, Leopold addressed a significant audience which seemed receptive to themes most similar to his own interests.

This led to the beginning of a lifelong concern with the meaning of wilderness. Leopold felt that what was at

stake in keeping some wild land was the "quality of American life" - the welfare of the nation beyond its material needs. Nash wrote that Leopold had "no desire to gainsay the achievements of civilization, but he insisted that they could go too far:"¹ "while the reduction of the wilderness has been a good thing, its extermination would be a very bad one."²

Leopold, following Thoreau's notions, saw the solution in a balance between two desirables. Grouping for a comprehensible metaphor, Leopold declared:

What I am trying to make clear is that if in a city we had six vacant lots available to the youngsters of a certain neighborhood for playing ball, it might be 'development' to build houses on the first, and the second, and the third, and the fourth, and even the fifth, but when we build houses on the last one, we forget what houses are for. The sixth house would not be development at all, but rather . . . stupidity.³

Nash felt that Leopold's rhetoric of preservationism lacked the necessary attributes required to solidify the public behind the conviction that loss of the wilderness would be a drastic expense to the individual. Leopold's rhetoric exemplified a new criterion which would redefine a "progressive civilization as one that valued and preserved its remaining wilderness."⁴

Leopold did not reiterate the standard themes of popular wilderness preservation and outdoor recreation. Instead he used a rhetoric that would tactically transform the essays of wilderness preservation into the bases for later persuasive appeals.

One of the best examples of Leopold's ability to

highlight rhetorically the significance of wilderness preservation is to be found in his book A Sand County Almanac. Leopold observed:

An innumerable host of actions and attitudes, comprising perhaps the bulk of all land relations, is determined by the land-users' tastes and predilections, rather than by his purse. The bulk of all land relations hinges on investments of time, forethought, skill, and faith rather than on investments in cash. As a land-user thinketh, so is he.⁵

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the notion of outdoor recreation was seen as a byproduct of forest recreation policy. This association was seen as an all encompassing factor of camping, picnicking, hiking, hunting and fishing within the forest environment. Leopold wrote in his essay, "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy," that Giffort Pinchot stated:

. . . on the contrary they would be opened up and developed as producing forests, and that such development would, in the long run, itself constitute the best assurance that they would neither remain a wilderness by 'bottling up' their resources nor become one through devastation.⁶

Pinchot promoted the doctrine of highest use and its criterion, "the greatest good to the greatest number." However, Leopold felt that the principle of highest use did not itself "demand that representative portions of some forests be preserved as wilderness."⁷

Had it not been for Leopold and his literary essays for wilderness preservation, the preservation movement of today might not be as prominent and forceful as highlighted by

contemporary concern. The Leopoldian legends and Leopoldian dogmas have fostered the present day concern for our recreational resources. The underlying assumptions of modern day philosophy of wilderness preservation can be connected with the philosophy of Aldo Leopold. Let no one disservice these qualities. To the strictly materialistic viewpoint of most, Leopold wrote:

In measuring the value of recreation, we are so obsessed with the numbers who now participate that we have forgotten all about the intensity or quality of their experience. This obsession is especially prevalent in the landowning bureaus, which justify their mounting costs and expanding domain by their mounting public patronage.⁸

In a plea for preserving a few primitive forests, Leopold wrote an essay, "The Last Stand of the Wilderness." The following is a rhetorical critique of the essay.

Description and evaluation of structure shall center on three components: (1) the arrangement of the ideas presented; (2) reasons for such an arrangement; and (3) the emergence of a central theme.

Two general ideas emerge in the essay, "The Last Stand of the Wilderness." One declares the necessity for preserving a few primitive forests.

The preservation of the wilderness supplies a unique need in recreation, unfortunately, it is a need that must be met by foresight. Once destroyed, it cannot be re-created. 'Wilderness' is the one kind of playground which mankind cannot build to order.⁹

Also prevalent is the idea of "outdoor recreation" in forest policy. This has been true of the latest natural resource to be discovered, namely the group called Outdoor Recreation.

This "discovery" that we need a national policy on Outdoor Recreation is in fact so new that the ink has barely dried on its birth certificate. These two themes were developed in three major divisions in the body of the essay. Perhaps it was necessary to develop the message in such a small number of divisions which led considerable attention to the essay. However, each major point seemed to introduce yet another dimension of those two broad general ideas.

Major and minor divisions within the essay are illustrated as follows.

Introduction

- I. "How many of those whole-hearted conservationists who berate the past generation for its shortsightedness in the use of natural resources have stopped to ask themselves for what new evils the next generation will berate us?"
- II. "In fact, our tendency is not to call things resources until the supply runs short."
- III. "This has been true of the latest natural resource to be 'discovered,' namely the group of things collectively called Outdoor Recreation."
- IV. "This discovery that we need a national policy on Outdoor Recreation is in fact so new that the ink has barely dried on its birth certificate."
- V. "The purpose of this article is to show why the wilderness is valuable, how close it is to exhaustion and

why, and what can be done about it."

Body

- I. "Wild places are the rock-bottom foundation of a good many different kinds of outdoor play, including pack and canoe trips in which hunting, fishing, or just exploring may furnish the flavoring matter."
 - A. "By 'wild places' I mean wild regions big enough to absorb the average man's two weeks' vacation without getting him tangled up in his own back track."
 - B. "Driving a pack train across or along a graded highway is distinctly not a pack trip--it is merely exercise, with about the same flavor as lifting dumbbells. Neither is canoeing in the wake of a motor launch or down a lane of summer cottages a canoe trip."
- II. "Is the opportunity for wilderness trips valuable?"
 - A. "In all the category of outdoor vocations and outdoor sports there is not one, save only the tilling of the soil, that bends and molds the human character like wilderness travel."
 - B. "A national policy for the establishment of wilderness recreation grounds would in some instances be easy to put into operation if we act at once."
 - C. "Wilderness areas in the National Forests would serve especially the wilderness-hunter, since

hunting is not and should not be allowed in the Parks."

- D. "On the other hand, wilderness areas in the National Parks would serve all kinds of wilderness-lovers except the hunter."
- E. "Meanwhile the remaining wild areas in both the Forests and Parks are being pushed back by road road construction at a very rapid rate, so rapid that unless something is done, the large areas of wilderness will mostly disappear within the next decade."
- F. "This paper is a plea for a definite expression of public opinion on the question of whether a system of wilderness areas should be established in our public Forests and Parks.

III. "Let me illustrate what I mean by saying that administrative officers can not effectively execute a wilderness policy without the help of a definite public demand."

- A. "The point is that governmental policies can not be actually applied without many decisions by administrative officers involving the adjustment of conflicting interests."
- B. "The public interest must speak up or lose."
- C. "The dangers of delay in formulating a national policy for the establishment of wilderness recreation grounds are strongly emphasized in the

present situation of the Lake States."

D. "A start toward such a system has already been made at the initiative of the Forest Service."

1. Jackson Hole

2. Gila

E. "What now seems to me important is for the government to undertake and the public to support the establishment of similar areas in every state that still contains National Forest and Park lands suitable for wilderness purposes."

Conclusion

I. "Let us now consider some of the practical details of how the proposed system of wilderness areas should be administered."

1. Lake States

2. Gila

II. "The acceptance of the idea of wilderness areas entails, I admit, a growth in the original conception of National Forests."

III. "When the forests were first established, recreation did not exist in the minds of either the foresters or the public as an important use of the public Forests."

IV. "One wilderness area could, I firmly believe, be fitted into the National Forests of each State without material sacrifice of other kinds of playgrounds or

other kinds of uses."

V. "Now what do the lovers of wilderness trips have to say about it?"

The outline and themes help to illustrate the adequacy of the organizational structure of this essay. At times, Leopold supplied the audience with major points but also supported these with internal summaries. This attribute reflects complete thinking on a major idea. One of the major strengths, however, was the attempt to weave two separate and distinct themes--wilderness preservation and forest recreation--into one. Leopold developed both simultaneously, but still they remained separate and distinct entities. These two themes were developed in three major divisions which followed a pattern of logical arrangement. Each major point revealed another aspect of wilderness preservation and added yet another dimension of those two broad general areas.

The arrangement of Leopold's essay was correct and essential. The introduction was brief and direct. It set the stage for what was to come in the remainder of the essay. Although he employed internal summaries, there were suggestive appeals to action. Major transitions within the essay were smooth and fluid by such devices as signposts. These terms helped unify thought: "Another question is that of fire," "Let us now consider," "Let me illustrate." In general, the signposts were used within each major point. These signposts suggested possible solutions to problems that

Leopold raised under each point. These labels could have been confusing to the readers; however, illustrations for each major point were presented in a logical manner.

Leopold stated his immediate purpose (that of wilderness preservation) and his ultimate objective (forest recreation). He arranged his discussion around the policy of wilderness preservation, the forest recreational policy, and the issues of outdoor recreation. Finally, the arrangement of the ideas within the essay added clarity, but might also have confused the readers to some extent due to the inadequacy of specific governmental policy.

The specific criteria to judge style focuses on two questions: (1) was the language correct, clear, and appropriate; (2) was the language embellished with any stylistic devices that added impressiveness and vividness?

Stylistically, the essay served an instructive and informative purpose, intentionally or not. Specific identity was a characteristic of Leopold's style that enhanced an informative purpose:

One wilderness area could, I firmly believe, be fitted into the National Forests or each State without material sacrifice of other kinds of playgrounds or other kinds of uses.¹⁰

He itemized those units charged with the execution of future action and then identified what action should take place and by whom.

While the language possessed clarity and directness, it did make use of a vigorous and lively style. Catch

phrases surfaced in the essay: "Now what do the lovers of wilderness trips have to say about it?" and "Is the idea for wilderness trips valuable?" These catch phrases added to the overall clarity and variety of the essay by the use of repetition. This redundancy led to the underscoring of key ideas within the essay. By using this tactic, Leopold seemed to urge audience acceptance through repetition of statement.

Occasionally, Leopold made use of terminology that was impressive and vivid. The use of loaded words found scope in phrases such as: "This has been true of the latest natural resource to be discovered, namely the group of things collectively called Outdoor Recreation." Perhaps Leopold was attempting to stir or move his readers through the use of companion word choices, such as "wild places." By using loaded words and companion word choices, Leopold elicited reader response.

Leopold's essay, "The Last Stand of the Wilderness," reaffirmed to the public that there was a fundamentally important need for us to preserve our wild lands in order to have national character. The essay was adequately organized in general and categorized under three major divisions. Each division led to a general topic of discussion. His central themes, wilderness preservation and forest recreation, emerged in the opening paragraphs and found scope throughout the remainder of the essay. There were no structural problems noted within the organizational

structure of the essay.

One of the major strengths in the organizational format of the essay was the attempt by Leopold to weave together the central themes, wilderness preservation and forest recreation, into one idea. In this attempt, he successfully developed each as separate entities. The introduction was brief, for Leopold wanted to get into the substantive portion of his essay immediately. Transitions flowed smoothly and helped to unify thought. "The next resource." "Let us now consider." The essay followed a topical format that led into new dimensions of his message. In any case, the arrangement of the essay added to clarity of the address.

Stylistically, the essay served an instructive purpose for promoting wilderness preservation. Leopold cited several problems that flourished throughout the system of wilderness policy. The use of terminology was impressive and vivid. Loaded words and lively sentences led to an overall departure from less appealing public sentiment and established a vigorous style of writing.

The failure to deal with the wilderness question distressed Leopold who continued to try to mobilize the public with magazine articles like, "The Last Stand of the Wilderness."

Conservation Esthetic

The following is an essay that Leopold wrote in the March-April, 1938, issue of Bird-Lore.

One theme emerges from the text: outdoor recreation as it pertains to "goodness." An outline reveals the three main portions of the essay.

Introduction

- I. "Barring love and war, few enterprises are undertaken with such abandon, or by such diverse individuals, or with so paradoxical a mixture of appetite and altruism, as that group of avocations known as outdoor recreation."
- A. "It is, by common consent, a good thing for people to get back to nature."

Body

- I. "Recreation became a problem with a name in the days of the elder Roosevelt, when the railroads which had banished the countryside from the city began to carry citydweller, en masse, to the countryside."
- A. "The automobile has spread this once mild and local predicament to the outermost limits of good roads-- it has made scarce in the hinterlands something once abundant in the back forty."
- B. "The retreat of the wilderness under the barrage of motorized tourists is no local thing;"
- C. "This is Outdoor Recreation, Model 1938."
- II. "Who now is the recreationist, and what does he seek?"
- A. "Take a look, first, at any Duck marsh."

- B. "At some near-by resort is still another nature-lover - the kind who writes bad verse on birchbark."
 - C. "Lastly, there is the professional, striving through countless conservation organizations to give the nature-seeking public what it wants, or to make it want what he has to give."
- III. "Recreation is commonly spoken of as an economic resource."
- A. "It has indeed an economic aspect."
 - B. "It has also an ethical aspect."
- IV. "Public policies for outdoor recreation are controversial."
- A. ". . . each is considering a different component of the recreational process."
 - 1. "We begin with the simplest and most obvious: the physical objects which the outdoorsman may seek, find, capture, and carry away."
 - 2. "Let us now consider another component of recreation which is more subtle and complex: the feeling of isolation in nature."
 - 3. "We now contrast with the isolation-component that very distinct if simple one which we may label fresh-air and change-of-scene."

4. "We come now to another component: the perception of the natural living things upon it have achieved their characteristic forms (evolution) and by which they maintain their existence (ecology)."
5. "There is, lastly, a fifth component: the sense of husbandry."

Conclusion

I. "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."

A. "Recreational development is a job, not ob building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind."

The introduction seemed to be directed toward immediate assurance that outdoor recreation was a good thing. Leopold also stressed the concern for its pursuit. Thus, he began with basic elements calculated to capture the attention and to hold the interest of the readers. The introduction also contained the thesis. This statement clarified both the purpose of the essay and previewed the ideas that were to be presented: "It is, by common consent, a good thing for people to get back to nature." "But wherein lies the goodness, and what can be done to encourage its pursuit?" The

introduction was brief, yet instructive, in previewing the substantive portion of the essay which followed.

As indicated earlier, four divisions highlighted the substantive portion of the essay. Major transitions within the essay were smooth and fluid. Such terms as the following helped to unify thought: "It is clear," "It seems timely," "Consider, for example." However, no numerical signposts--such as "first," "second," "third"--were used. But, these signposts were utilized when discussing significant categories of recreation. There were however, other methods used to discern absolutely between major point and a possible sub-point. Major divisions did not need clearer identity. Also, the structure was assisted by periodic summations. The writer inventoried progress, such as recalling points before introducing additional areas of concern. The readers probably had no difficulty recalling all major divisions immediately after reading. Possibly, Leopold chose to reduce the topics in number in order for combination of similar topics. Perhaps the writer even anticipated that the readers would forge such combinations. However, without explicit organizational directions offered by such devices as enumeration, the readers likely would have been frustrated in attempting to absorb all of the major divisions.

Leopold concluded his essay by reassuring the public that recreational processing was based on perception of the individual. His final appeal asked the reader for

cooperation and promised hope. These were brief statements that offered an adequate conclusion. However, a summation of both thesis statement and major points preceding the final appeal would have enhanced structure. With the four sections of the body, a more comprehensive overview was in order.

The ideas, as presented in the brief, are in the order found in the literary essay. The organizational structure relies heavily on a topical arrangement. Leopold's main point, recreational policy, was repeated throughout the text. There seems to be rationale for such redundancy. The restatement of this theme seems to suggest the importance that he placed on the public. Also, in the wake of bitter criticism by some, he prepared the reader for future alterations and adjustments. This amount of repetition promoted overall clarity in the organizational pattern.

The specific criteria to judge style focuses on two questions: (1) was the language correct, clear, and appropriate? (2) was the language embellished with any stylistic devices that added impressiveness and vividness?

The major characteristic in Leopold's use of language is directness. The stress on this aspect of style is illustrated in the following remarks:

The Government, which assays to substitute public for private operation of recreational lands, is unwittingly giving away to this field officers a large share of what it seeks to offer its citizens.¹¹
 . . . To promote perception is the only truly creative part of recreational engineering.¹²

At one point during the essay, Leopold remarked: "Perception, in short, cannot be purchased with either learned degrees or dollars; it grows at home as well as abroad, and he who has a little may use it to better advantage than he who has much."¹³ This direct language reflects a characteristic of stylistic clarity that he employed in his essay.

Leopold also used questions to involve his readers. Two specific phrases that surfaced in underscoring key ideas included "The retreat of wilderness under the barrage of motorized tourists is no local thing" and "Recreational development is a job, not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind." By using this tactic, Leopold seemed to urge audience acceptance through repetition of statement.

Another characteristic of Leopold's style is specific identity, as reflected in the following quotation: "To those devoid of imagination, a blank place on the map is a useless waste; to others, the most valuable part."¹⁴ He itemized those units charged with the execution of future action before identifying what that action will be. The units are specific; but the action is broad, general, illusive in regard to recreational policy. He assured the public that he is familiar with who should execute that policy, although he is unsure of the form that execution should take.

The directness of the language was reflected further in the use of questions, such as, "But wherein lies the goodness, and what can be done to encourage its pursuit?"¹⁵; and "Who

now is the recreationist, and what does he seek?"¹⁶ Thus, overall, clarity was assisted by the use of repetition, itemization, questions, and anticipated audience reaction. Use of such colloquial terms as "unspoiled places" were both appropriate and clear in emphasizing the idea under consideration.

While the language possesses clarity and directness, it is not simultaneously bland and dry. He makes use of terminology that is impressive and vivid within the essay. His style is to a certain extent utilitarian; it is not striking in many respects. The language, however, paints pictures. While it is sometimes lively and vigorous, as reflected in the use of colloquial terms, it is also fresh and picturesque. He invented new methods for expressing old ideas. There is an apparent attempt to stir or to move the readers through the use of vibrant, glowing, or majestic word choices. This possibly is a common trait among environmentalists who possess the creativity or the desire to be stylistically memorable. Perhaps there is a danger of notoriety that pursues writers who attempt a vivid and impressive style. However, Leopold was a writer for the advancement of a cause, not his own. Thus, a critic's insistence on the writer's employment of creative language can suggest a degree of independence that may appear suicidal to the writer.

Nevertheless, Aldo Leopold was in the ideal position to employ stylistic innovations. He was a prominent public

figure with a certain license to be his own boss; he was a minority during a period of rising independence for those with such duties as policy making bureaucrats. Certainly a departure from the hum-drum bureaucratic style would be a strong method for exploiting those conditions and attitudes. Fortunately, the essay was memorable and attractive due to its impressive and vivid stylistic devices.

His central themes were those of wilderness preservation and recreational policy. The themes emerged in the opening statements and remained consistent throughout the essay. Four major points were developed in a topical arrangement. Perhaps structural clarity was strengthened by such a format.

Language clarity was assisted by the use of repetition, itemization, questions, and overall directness. While his language was fresh and lively, it did possess a conversational style of writing. As an essayist and expositor of the public good, Leopold employed stylistic devices that was impressive and vivid.

END NOTES

¹Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, 1967), p. 187.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 188.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac (New York, 1966), p. 204.

⁶Aldo Leopold, "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy," Journal of Forestry, Vol. 19 (November, 1921), p. 720.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Paul Errington, "In Appreciation of Aldo Leopold," The Journal of Wildlife Management, Vol. 12 (October, 1948), p. 343.

⁹Aldo Leopold, "The Last Stand of the Wilderness," American Forests, Vol. XLI (November, 1921), p. 599.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 602.

¹¹Aldo Leopold, "Conservation Esthetic," Bird-Lore (March-April, 1938), p. 108.

¹²Ibid., p. 107.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 101.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 102.

CHAPTER IV

LEOPOLD'S IMPACT ON WILDERNESS PRESERVATION

Pressures on the Forest Service by numerous groups were supplemented by preservation sentiment from a dedicated minority within the Forest Service itself. In looking back at history, the earliest activist was Arthur Carhart, a landscape architect serving as recreation engineer for the service. In 1919, Carhart was assigned to survey the Trapper's Lake area in Colorado in order to establish homesites and routes for possible roads. At this time Aldo Leopold was assistant district forester in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Leopold's notions of wilderness preservation were shared by Carhart. With Carhart, Leopold suggested an outline for wilderness preservation; it would be the first forest service document to argue for wilderness preservation.

It was Leopold who has been characterized as the "Father of National Forest Wilderness system."¹ Leopold's interest in wilderness preservation was a by-product of his interest in the wildlife of the country. Leopold believed that to preserve wildlife, one must preserve wilderness. To Leopold, wilderness meant nothing less than "an area large enough to contain a two-week pack trip without the participants ever

having to backtrack or cross their own trail."² In 1921, Leopold set out his own plan for such a wilderness preservation system. He did this is what was to be the first of many articles on the subject. The article, "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy," highlighted this thrust. The next year, District 3 forester, Frank Pooler, acted upon Leopold's essay and set aside an area of 574,000 acres for wilderness recreation.³

The Gila Wilderness reservation was set aside as part of a district recreation plan. Such reservations were protected from development.

The first National Conference on Outdoor Recreation convened in May 1924. Although this forum was intended to discuss wilderness preservation, the subject was never touched upon. The failure to deal with the wilderness question distressed Leopold, who continued to try to mobilize the public with magazine articles like "The Last Stand of the Wilderness."⁴ Leopold was indefatigable in his cause for wilderness preservation, but he had neither the position nor the resources to carry the campaign further without the support of his superiors. Most professional foresters were not yet ready to accept recreation in the national forests, much less the notion of wilderness preservation. Leopold was ahead of his time.

In 1928, the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation received the report from Greeley in regard to wilderness preservation. The report, Recreation Resources of Federal

Lands, devoted its longest chapter to the national forests, and fully half of that chapter was dedicated to the values of wilderness recreation. It quoted extensively from Leopold's "Last Stand of the Wilderness" and described twenty-one areas of wilderness in the national forests comprising a total of 12.5 million acres. The report's conclusions stressed the importance of wilderness.⁵

Leopold's conviction regarding the need to set aside wilderness areas grew initially out of his work in recreational planning. He was charged with coordinating the activities in the national forests of the Southwest under an act of March 4, 1915, that authorized the leasing of sites in the forests for summer homes and commercial recreational establishments. This statute was the first significant Congressional recognition of recreation as a legitimate use of the forests, and it set the stage for recreational policy.⁶

Leopold's most prominent project was preparation of a working plan for the Grand Canyon, which was administered by the Forest Service before it was transferred to the Park Service in 1919. He worked with Frank Waugh, chief consultant to the Forest Service on recreational uses.

Leopold's sense was motivated not to be scenic grandeur like John Muir, "but viewed rather by the fragrance of wild snapdragons under foot or the song of the canyon wren tumbling down from a ledge high overhead and bounding on the rocks to the pink shadows far below."⁷

Leopold argued for preservation of the wilderness on

the principle of "highest use," to the doctrine of "multiple use." He maintained "highest use is a very varied use" and he felt that it needed to provide for the needs and desires of the minority who favored wilderness recreation as well as for other forest uses and users.⁸

Leopold was convinced that America had to take a new look at its vanishing wilderness lands. Leopold argued that "is it not a bit beside the point for us to be so solicitous about preserving (American) institutions without giving so much as a thought to preserving the environment which produced them."⁹ Through this rhetoric, Leopold was able to motivate citizen groups to protect resources and recreational opportunities.

Leopold began his campaign for wildlife preservationism and outdoor recreation policy in the Southwest by organizing local game protective associations to promote enforcement of game laws and the creation of wildlife refuges. His aim was to restore the multiple use concept. By the 1920s he had begun developing principles of scientific game management modeled on concepts and techniques of sustained-yield forest management. He told the National Game Conference in New York in 1924, "The most important single development which the last ten years have brought forth is implied in the word management."¹⁰

We think of Aldo Leopold as an environmentalist and an early prophet of ecological awareness and concern for the larger community of life, yet he usually referred to himself

as a conservationist, using the term which was popularized in the early 1900s by President Theodore Roosevelt and the first chief of the Forest Service Gifford Pinchot. Pinchot chose to idealize the concept of wise use and efficient management of resources. John Muir and William Hornadays were concerned with esthetics and preservationism. By this, they were interested in the scenic grandeur of the wilderness, not so much with the use of the resource or the recreational underpinnings. After viewing Leopold's rhetoric, one can see that through his essays in Sand County Almanac and other writings Leopold would seem to speak for the tradition of Muir rather than Pinchot. With his view for ecological diversity, his emphasis on land health, his impatience with purely economic motives for conservation, and his call for the extension of ethics to the relation between man and land, Leopold has come to be regarded as a philosopher of the new environmental movement, a movement whose proponents are at odds with the contemporary Forest Service. Aldo Leopold spent the first half of his career in the Forest Service, serving from 1909-1924 in District 3, and from 1924-1928 as Associate Director of the U.S. Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin.¹¹

By 1928 he left forestry for a new career in a profession he helped establish--wildlife management. Essentially, all of the books and articles he wrote stem from the second half of his career. The sole exception is his role in securing establishment of the Gila Wilderness in New Mexico

in 1924. Leopold's career as a forester involved him in a broad scope of Forest Service and other conservation activities, in the context of which his proposals for the Gila was but such a small factor.¹²

In 1915, the Forest Service began efforts to develop recreation resources in the forests. Leopold chose to attack this path and began writing material which he sent to Washington. In an article in the "Yale Forest School News" he asserted the need for a new type of training of foresters --sanitary engineers. He was also responsible for planning the more rational development of tourist concessions at the Grand Canyon, administered by the Forest Service before the establishment of Grand Canyon National Park in 1919.¹³

His best known accomplishment and impact on forest recreational policy, as already indicated, was to lay the groundwork for designation in 1924 of the Gila Wilderness, which became the prototype for roadless wilderness areas in the National Forests.

Leopold managed to persuade his Forest Service colleagues in the Southwest of the logic of his views. Furthermore, through writings of articles in such magazines as American Forests and Forest Life, Outdoor Life, and Sunset, he laid the groundwork for establishment of the National Wilderness Preservation System, made law four decades later in 1964.¹⁴

Events in Washington led Leopold to the national scene. Establishment of Leopold's chair at the University of Wisconsin came just as President Franklin D. Roosevelt's

New Deal was shifting into high gear, and millions of federal dollars suddenly became available for work relief projects and purchase of lands. All these projects, each with at least a potential recreation component, generated an extraordinary demand for trained supervisory personnel. Aldo Leopold placed a few of his students in field positions with federal agencies, served as advisor to a number of projects, and stressed the importance of integration of land uses--farming, forestry, and recreation.

In early 1934 he served on the Collier's Publishing Company and on the President's Committee on Wildlife Restoration. He was charged with drafting a proposal for dovetailing Roosevelt's \$25 million program for federal purchase of submarginal farmland with a program for recreation. Leopold stood alone on the committee in arguing for more research through universities which he thought were in a better position than the federal government to deal with local conditions. His efforts were rewarded in 1935 with the creation of the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit Program, which provided for research units in nine land-grant colleges across the nation.¹⁵

The move toward more basic ecological research in the mid 1930s was more than a quest for new ideas. Leopold's notions of his rhetoric shifted from an historical and recreational emphasis to an ecological and ethical justification for wilderness.

Wilderness had an important place in Aldo Leopold's

land ethic as a model of ecological perfection. According to Nash, "Civilization altered the environment so drastically that unmodified, wild country assumed significance as a base-datum of normality, a picture of how healthy land maintains itself as an organism."¹⁶ Leopold remarked in this regard; "Wild places, reveal what the land was, what it is, and what it ought to be."¹⁷

Speaking on "The State of the Professions" in his presidential address to the Wildlife Society in 1940, Leopold spoke of men who had begun with the job of producing something to shoot; hunting men. He felt that they might, without knowing it, help write a new definition of the purpose of science. He was looking forward to the day when the difference between science and art would diminish, and he hoped that ecologists might help diminish this notion.¹⁸

In his later years Leopold also recognized wilderness as a pointed reminder to modern man of his actual relation to the natural earth. Moreover, he felt that the preservation of wild country was "an act of national contrition" on the part of a people who had been so careless in the past.¹⁹

A thorough examination of materials prepared by the Forest Service indicate that Aldo Leopold was a pioneer in wilderness preservation. According to a 1973 Forest Service pamphlet, "nearly 40 years ago" the Forest Service pioneered in preserving America's wilderness heritage "led by Aldo Leopold," then the assistant forester of District 3, located in New Mexico. This tribute is historically inaccurate. The

following statement gives added illumination.

The Forest Service pioneered this concept in the 1920s. Studies of wild lands on the National Forests began, and in 1924 a large part of what is now the Gila Wilderness in New Mexico was set aside as a special area for the preservation of wilderness. The Gila, the nation's first designated wilderness, contains 500,000 acres of primitive American lands astride the Mogollon Rim and Diablo mountain ranges.²⁰

According to Baldwin, the quotation is inaccurate. For example, a 1940 publication of the Wilderness Society likewise traced wilderness areas from "their formal beginning in the mind and on the pen point of Aldo Leopold to the achievement by Robert Marshall of a practical new wilderness system in the National Forests."²¹ Furthermore, Broome stated: "Unquestionably, Aldo Leopold was the Jeremiah of wilderness thinking."²² Therefore, in this context, Leopold wrote:

I will here attempt to cover the history of the wilderness movement in the Southwest prior to 1926. I suppose subsequent events are too well known to require comment. The earliest action I can find in my files is a letter dated September 21, 1922, notifying the District Forester that two local Game Protective Associations had endorsed the establishment of a wilderness area on the head of the Gila River, in the Gila National Forest. I suppose one may assume a prior "incubation period" of a year or two. I take it, then, that the movement in the Southwest must have started about 1920. This assumption is further corroborated by the publication in 1921, of my paper, "The Wilderness and Its Place in Forest Recreational Policy. . . ." In 1924 the action stage was reached. I have a map dated March 31, 1924 showing the Gila area boundaries as originally proposed by me and as approved by District Forester F. C. Pooler. I don't know when Washington finally added its approval. How widely had the idea spread by 1924? I offer in evidence the resolutions passed by the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation (Journal of Forestry, October, 1924) which contain no mention of wilderness.²³

END NOTES

¹Craig Allin, The Politics of Wilderness Preservation (Connecticut, 1982), p. 70.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Susan Flader, "Aldo Leopold and the Wilderness Idea," Living History, Vol. XLII-XLIII (April, 1978-March, 1980), p. 4.

⁷Ibid., p. 5.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Aldo Leopold, "Wilderness as a Form of Land-Use," Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics, Vol. 1 (1925), p. 40.

¹⁰Susan Flader, "Preservation of the System," American Forests, Vol. LXXXII (1976), p. 49.

¹¹Ibid., p. 52.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Susan Flader, "A Biographical Sketch of Aldo Leopold: Thinking Like a Mountain Man," Journal of Forest History, Vol. XVII (April, 1973), p. 9.

¹⁶Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, 1967), p. 198.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Susan Flader, p. 53.

¹⁹Roderick Nash, p. 199.

²⁰Donald N. Baldwin, "Wilderness: Concept and Challenge," Colorado Magazine, Vol. XLIV (1967), p. 225.

²¹Ibid., p. 226.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

There is little doubt as to Leopold's direct public influence upon the establishment of the Gila Wilderness in New Mexico. References in government documents to magazine articles, and personal testimony certainly included Aldo Leopold's writings to this effect. Moreover, the Forest Service specifically cited Leopold's writings in regard to wilderness preservation and forest recreation policy.

Leopold thus was successful in accomplishing his immediate aims: that of wilderness preservation as an environmental exigence. Leopold's readers were able to identify with his clarity and directness of language. Through this rhetoric, he was able to argue for the preservation of the wilderness.

Furthermore, through terminology that was impressive and vivid, his audience was able to identify with action that needed to take place. Leopold's appeals argued through repetition of statement and underscoring of key ideas. Specialized groups such as the Wilderness Society and Forest Service served as primary vehicles of preservationism.

The primary purpose of this chapter shall be to discuss

the importance of the two essays critiqued and to discuss possible reasons for the general ideas presented by Aldo Leopold.

Aldo Leopold was a promoter of wilderness preservation and was involved in one of the most pressing problems of the 1900s--the wilderness problem in America. Much of Leopold's prominence was due to the attention he received for his stance in favor of wilderness preservation and forest recreation policy. His fight for a stronger concern in America highlighted but one aspect of his writings. Stimulated by the cause of a powerful preservation system, Leopold wrote several essays to support and motivate wilderness preservation throughout America. Two of them have been analyzed in this study. Both essays are different in method, yet both contain striking similarities that seem to illustrate characteristics of Aldo Leopold's literary talents.

The two essays analyzed in the foregoing chapters were the only ones written by Leopold for definitional purposes. Leopold's goals were to be: (1) wilderness preservation and (2) forest recreation policy. The essays concentrated on directness for the purpose of unifying his readers. His rhetoric of preservationism seems to be a constant within the essays. It was characteristic of promoting cohesion among his readers. By using this strategy, Leopold was able to counter the possible conflicts that flourished within the public sentiment. There was a need to unify the efforts of

his readers and to reaffirm that they could do something for the preservation of the wilderness.

Leopold sought to establish arguments within the essays based on emotional appeals. Some logical and ethical appeals did arise but found little scope throughout the essays. There was a need to unify the efforts of his readers.

Each essay was arranged in major divisions. Each division added to a much broader dimension of thought. Leopold attempted to weave together two separate and distinct themes--wilderness preservation and forest recreation--into one. The major characteristic in his use of language was directness. Stylistically, the essays served in an instructive and informative manner, whereby, he employed devices seemingly for the purpose of holding attention.

Had it not been for Leopold's literary essays for wilderness preservation, the movement today might not be as forceful as it is. Finally, wilderness was significant to Leopold as the essential source, the departure point for man and his civilization.¹

Aldo Leopold's thinking was shaped by the land itself and by his changing perception of the land with which he was associated. Baldwin wrote:

In the past ten years we have created numerous environmental laws and institutions of government have cleaned up some polluted lakes and streams. But our striving suggests that as in Leopold's time we seem to be good for a few years of righteous flexing, yet lack endurance.²

Leopold's appeals contained the potential bolt of light to effect radical change in American's attitudes toward the

environment and, indeed, toward the ethical bases of their lifestyle. He unified the rational and ethical appeals for a statement of nature in an effort to lessen the degree of strife between man and nature.

In essence, Leopold was influential in thought and ethic in regard to wilderness preservation. In regard to policy, his influence had little effect. Therefore, Aldo Leopold may be viewed as a catalyst for the preservation of the wilderness.

Aldo Leopold was not very optimistic about the future of a land ethic. He wrote:

No important change in ethics, was ever accomplished without an internal change in our intellectual emphases, loyalties, affections, and convictions. The proof that conservation has not yet touched these foundations of conduct lies in the fact that philosophy and religion have not yet heard of it.³

Allan R. Brockway maintains:

Declares that the nonhuman world has just as much right to its internal integrity as does the human world, that human beings transgress their divine authority when they destroy or fundamentally alter the rocks, the trees, the air, the water, the soil, the animals--just as they do when they murder another human being.⁴

In short, his influence may not have directly affected policy, but his influence did in fact affect thought. In 1977, the widely cited task-force report of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Unfinished Agenda: The Citizen's Policy Guide to Environmental Issues, concluded that "ultimately the preservation of all the mysteries and wonders contained within the earth's ecosystem depends less on rules and

regulations than on attitudes. . . . Aldo Leopold called the necessary set of attitudes the 'land ethic'."5

As Nash pointed out, "ethics could be the guideline and, indeed, the key to environmental responsibility."6

Outdoor recreation is and has been available in the forests since their beginning. Today, outdoor recreation has become a primary use in many areas of our National Forests. Had it not been for Leopold, with his foresight, the opportunities afforded America's population regarding the use of natural resources for recreation and preservation would clearly have been far less than we enjoy today.

Without Aldo Leopold, the residents of the United States would have far less outdoor recreational resources to enjoy their leisure. The so-called prophet, a man of foresight and directness, an idealist in his time, be it Aldo Leopold.

END NOTES

¹Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind (New Haven, 1967), p. 198.

²Donald N. Baldwin, "Wilderness: Concept and Challenge," Colorado Magazine, Vol. XLIV (1967), p. 228.

³Roderick Nash, "Do Rocks Have Rights?", Center Magazine, Vol. X (1977), p. 12.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

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