

CONSERVATION CROSSFEED

Notes from AFCEE/ECC
Mar 2000

INTEGRATION ACROSS ECOLOGICAL SCALES

Recently, graduate students in the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University hosted a one-day symposium. The significance of this symposium offered a treatise on ecological integrity and biodiversity and the processes involved in conservation and resource management into the 21st Century.

For decades, ecologists were loners; they did fieldwork alone; they analyzed their data alone, they authored articles alone. They may have discussed different facts with likeminded individuals but for the most part they were alone. Over the past decade, more and more ecologists are realizing that they were only looking at a small piece of the puzzle -- theirs at a local level. Ecologists are now beginning to look to other disciplines -- physics, socio-economics, and geography -- for answers. They are looking beyond the small-scale research and more towards a landscape view. Away from the single population and towards the whole species distributed across the landscape.

To highlight a couple of the presentations, Ms. Joan Roughgarden from Stanford University discussed the integration of economics into resource management. Economists are using ecological models and developing monetary "values" for individual and collective resources. For example, its harvest value, and its recreation value weight the "value" of a trout in a natural system.

Dr. James Riechman, Director of the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, discussed the recent trend of researchers collaborating and co-authoring articles. More and more journals are showing the number of co-authors increasing from 2-3 to 5-10, and the disciplines of the co-authors including physics, economy, and engineering.

The closing speaker had a significant influence on a great many people in the Pacific Northwest -- Jack Ward Thomas. In addition to leading many of the Spotted Owl and the PNW Forest Management Plan working groups, he was also the Chief of the Forest Service for 3 years. He ended his presentation with a personal note to the audience, in particular the students. Be prepared to make tough decisions based on science and research; be prepared to go outside of your field of study to answer questions (social, political, and economic factors); and be prepared to stand by your decisions. A lot of new and exciting things are going to be happening in the 21st century.

Indian Tribes as Sovereign Governments.

Many non-Indian people think that the current emphasis on American Indian relations is based on relatively new legislation and policy enacted by the Federal Government. In fact, it is not so new, but is the result of evolving interpretations of the meanings of early Treaties, Supreme Court and other judicial decisions, and legislation over the years:

"During the modern era, tribes have achieved a historic objective by obtaining clear judicial and legislative recognition that Indian Tribes are sovereigns. Although tribes differ from states, Indian governments have a vast reservoir of reserved powers tracing to their inherent sovereignty, just as states have broad reserved rights under the tenth amendment of the Constitution. After 200 years of jurisprudence, it is at last settled that there are three separate sources of sovereignty--federal, state, and tribal--within the federal constitutional system.

The interlocking relationships between tribal, state, and local governments can be exceedingly complex. It is increasingly apparent that, in the future, the resolution of intergovernmental disputes may be achieved best through negotiation, rather than litigation. Such direct government-to-government relationships may, over time, result in a continuing process of tailoring jurisdictional relationships to the practical, local needs of affected sovereigns" [Indian Tribes as Sovereign Governments: A Sourcebook on Federal-Tribal History, Law, and Policy, page 48. AIRI Press, 1998]

This attitude of communication and consultation best summarizes the goals of the recent DOD American Indian and Alaska Native Policy. If you have any questions regarding the Policy, the AF's role, how to enter into government-to-government relations with Indian Tribes or Alaska Natives, or any other aspects of Indian-AF relationships, please contact Julia Cantrell or James Wilde at AFCEE/ECC. We can assist you in getting the answers you need.



CONSERVATION CROSSFEED

CONFERENCES:

29-30 Mar 2000. NATIONAL MILITARY FISH AND WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION (NMFWA), Chicago IL. More information at: <http://www.nmfwa.org/>. Dr. Ripley would like to remind everyone that the AF Breakout Session is on Friday, 31 Mar. A field trip to FERMI Labs outside of Chicago to see prairie restoration and bison re-introduction program is TUE, 28 Mar.

17-21 APR 2000. USAF NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP, Brooks AFB TX. See notice below.

17-19 May 2000. 3rd National Mitigation Banking Conference, Denver CO. See sidebar for details. More information at: www.terrene.org

8-10 Aug 2000. BASH (Combined Canada and US), Minneapolis/ St.Paul International Airport (MSP), Minnesota. More information is available at: <http://www.birdstrike.org/meetings/mn.htm>

NEW JOURNAL AVAILABLE -- 1st YEAR FREE!!!

I have received the first issue of the

Native Plants Journal

Let's just say I was impressed. This bi-annual publication provides a forum for dispersing practical information about the planting and growing of North American native plants for conservation, restoration, reforestation, landscaping, highway corridors. It has both peer-reviewed research-based articles and grassroots articles. The first issue has a couple of articles on longleaf pine restoration. If you would like more information about these articles, go to: <http://www.its.uidaho.edu/nativeplants/Preview/index.htm> for the abstracts.

The yearly subscription is a little pricey -- \$30.00 for two issues but I do feel that it will be worthwhile. I will be receiving a subscription and will pass along information from interesting articles.

For more information on native plants contact, Mary Anderson, AF Botanist, DSN 240-3808 or longleaf pine restoration contact, Kevin Porteck (-5631). We love to talk about these topics.

USAF NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCES PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP 17-21 APR 2000

A Natural/Cultural Resources Program Improvement Workshop is set for the spring of 2000 for MAJCOM participants. The purpose of the workshop is to review and make recommendations on improving specific NR/CR program areas, and to develop new program initiatives. The outcome of this workshop is to develop an outline for the revision of AFI-32-7064 and AFI 32-7065. This will be accomplished through interactive work sessions in breakout groups focusing on proposed discussion topics. If you, as a N/C Resource Manager, have topics of concern, pass them along to your MAJCOM representative.

UPCOMING EVENTS

EARTH DAY, 22 Apr 2000.

Although Earth Day is April 22, and many celebrations are scheduled on or near that date, it is important to remember that environmental responsibility is more than a one-day event. Earth Day exemplifies a daily commitment to the stewardship of the public resources entrusted to military care. Earth Day is the annual call for public attention toward environmental issues. It also is the best opportunity to bring your community neighbors onto your installation to show how you practice environmental stewardship.

ARBOR DAY, 29 Apr 2000. It is easy to tie Earth Day, Arbor Day and Wetlands Month together. Consider planting trees on Saturday the 29th and sit back and enjoy the benefits.

WETLANDS MONTH, May 2000

Every year in the month of May, WETLANDS are celebrated. There are a number of ideas and resources available for you to develop your own wetland awareness program. The Terrene Institute has an extensive list of environmental products (books, videos, educational resource kits, stickers, and much more).

A new BIODIVERSITY brochure will be available soon.