

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

The United States has the most successful system of wildlife management the world has ever known. Conservationists, especially hunters and trappers, supported the development of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. This model is defined by two fundamental principles and supported by seven pillars known as the seven sisters of conservation..

A. Fish and Wildlife belong to all Americans. Every citizen has the right to pursue them within legal limits.

B. We need to manage wildlife in ways that will sustain healthy populations forever.

The seven sisters of conservation

1. Wildlife as a public trust. Legally wildlife belongs to everyone, and is managed by State fish and wildlife agencies. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has authority over migratory birds and federally endangered species.
2. Elimination of Markets for Wildlife. The elimination of market hunting of most wildlife for meat, feathers, and other uses. The only exception is furbearers. Using regulated trapping, furbearer populations will sustain a commercial harvest and provide a significant benefit to society into perpetuity.
3. Allocation of Wildlife by Law. That the Public has ownership of the right to use wildlife and have a say in its management is guaranteed by law. Hunting and trapping privileges are not restricted to wealthy landowners or granted as special considerations.
4. Wildlife may be harvested only for a legitimate purpose. Killing wildlife for frivolous reasons is prohibited by law. The harvesting of wildlife must be for a legitimate purpose, such as using the animal or its parts for food, clothing, medicine, self-defense, property protection, or the overall health and wellbeing of the species..
5. Wildlife is considered an international resource. The Migratory Bird Act of 1916 between the United States and Canada was the world's first significant international treaty for the management of wildlife.
6. Science is the source of wildlife policy. Science has been and still is the primary basis for wildlife restoration and management. North Americans used wildlife science as a basis for managing wildlife decades ahead of everyone else in the world.
7. Democracy of hunting and trapping. In North America, everyone has the opportunity to participate in regulated hunting and trapping.