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# OREGON Fish & Wildlife JOURNAL



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This issue's cover photograph is of our beautiful Crater Lake National Park in Southern Oregon.

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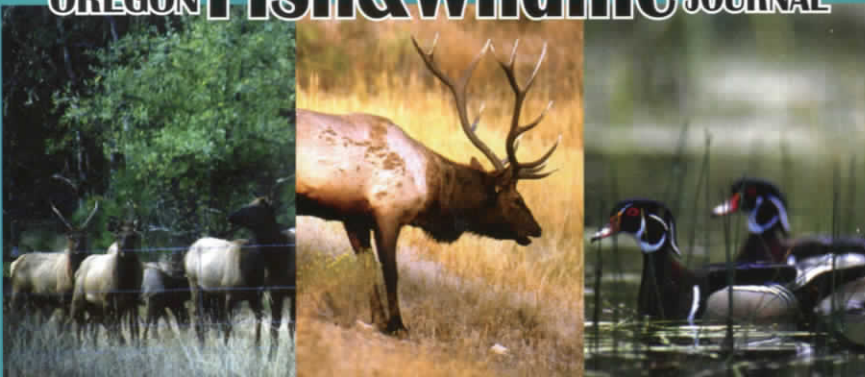
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*This article was originally published in 1971.*

*Mr. Hagenstein was decades ahead of his time. As true today as it was 47 years ago.*

# ENVIRONMENTALISTS

## A New Epidemic

By W.D. HAGENSTEIN



Forestry was America's first business and it started in the south. Captain John Smith started the harvest of trees at Jamestown in 1607 to provide shelter and warmth and to clear land for growing food. Forestry has been an environmental science since its beginning in America. This was true in Europe and Japan long before.

Today's preoccupation with the environment is a real plus for forestry. We ought to use it as the 2x4 to capture the people's attention so that they may learn our wonderful story of growing, harvesting, processing and then growing trees again for them and them alone. We should use the environmental preoccupation to remind Man that he was created in His image and that he is the center of our environmental everything.

Some years ago I lamented that the economic illiteracy of the people who live in town (and I called it "citified psychosis") made them believe that lumber came from the lumber yard, food from the super market and gasoline from the service station. What I was saying

is that our urban society has lost touch with the source of all its wealth and well being.

### **Forestry Future Never Brighter**

With a third of our whole nation occupied by forests, our only renewable source of building, packaging and communications materials, we have no other choice than to continue the kind of job which has been well started in this century. With the south having harvested two crops of timber and now growing a vigorous third, and the west still harvesting old growth timber, but following with the second crop close on its heels, the future of forestry in our nation was never brighter. But brighter only because the trees are there and not because of the current attitude of too many politicians who somehow don't see what forestry has done to get trees on the land and to build homes in town.

If these politicians observe it, they seem to ignore it, because somehow they believe that the one-man-one-vote concept, giving control as it does of rural land to

city people, means that forestry is more bad than good.

### **A Virulent Disease**

Now we have a new epidemic of environmentalists. It is a virulent disease and if not controlled could consume us. It is the vehicle on which the poison pen, men of preservation propaganda, are speeding through the countryside calling names, making charges and hit and running by dramatic and graphic TVing, photo pressing and word picturing the aftermath of the timber harvest. They never interpret that harvest in terms of homes, furniture, magazines, pictures, tissues and all the other essentials which come principally and in some cases only from wood. They show the egg shells, but not the omelet. They show the slash, but not the jobs. They show the disturbance to the land by logging, road building and slash disposal, but never the tree planting, the thinning, the genetics, the fertilizing and the healthy watersheds and beautiful countryside which trees make on each acre for the long years between their harvests.

Little credit is given by the Typhoid Marys of environmentalists to the tremendous job the forestry profession, the public forestry agencies and the forest industry have done in our time in substantially reducing the areas burned, damaged and destroyed by fire. Just within the short time of my professional career in forestry, we have reduced the area burned over from more than 30 million acres annually to less than one-tenth that amount in some recent years. And the trend continues downward because of a scientifically trained and experienced forest fire prevention and control force numbering 100,000 people and the generous response of the traveling public to the plea for keeping America green. Our record of forest fire prevention and control has chalked up an environmental plus for the nation.

Virtually no credit is given either by the extenders of environmentalitis to the tremendous job of reforestation which is averaging a million and a half acres annually at present. This is a ten-fold increase in the last 40 years and has done a lot to build up America's timber supply while beautifying the countryside, protecting watersheds and providing a favorable habitat for wildlife. Forestry's detractors always decry timber cutting and logging, but never mention that on the heels of the harvest new forests are started on purpose by Man for his own future. If they see us planting or see the new trees growing, they either conveniently overlook it or callously ignore it. America's record of reforestation has also chalked up an environmental plus for our nation.

Not much credit has been given either to the fact that since World War II America has built almost 40 percent of all the homes ever built in its history and that

80 percent of them came directly from the forest. Neither is credit given to the desire now to make everyman's environment better by the public policy of a decent home for every family. This goal can be fulfilled by America's forests for this generation and the next and the next if we stem the epidemic of environmentalists so that we can make forestry stronger yet on the more than 500 million acres which the Deity destined to be used by Americans throughout their long future to house themselves and their offspring.

### **Error On Many Counts**

Environmentalists is in error on many counts. One is that its exponents have tried to snatch the mantle of conservation away from the forestry profession which started it in the United States. And, too many people trying to stem environmentalist by balanced land management between the spiritual and the material have quit calling themselves conservationists. Yet they dignify the anti-forestry forces by that term.

Another error popping up more frequently in forestry literature and on the public platform is the tendency for foresters to apologize for their management of the land which is belittled and criticized by the exponents of environmentalists. Rather than responding defensively, how much better it would be to tell people the truth about our activities and show them the results, both in the forest and in the city.

We hear much these days about a quality environment. No argument about it, everyone wants a better shake. Everyone wants clean air and clean water. Everyone wants a decent home. Everyone wants a job or at least needs one. Everyone wants to raise his family in the security of safe cities and with freedom of choice or where his youngsters go to school, go to church, play, work and live. Everybody seems to want to foist their ideas on everyone else. There is little of the live and let live philosophy and the give and take of democracy. We've forgotten what a great thing it was that our Founding Fathers were men of property, but gave everyone else the vote to determine the future of that property. It was this act which separated us from the older countries which our ancestors left in droves to found America. This is what has held America up as the shining example for those millions in the world who don't have the privilege of self determination today, but want it dearly. Of course, we can all do a better job in everything we do. That's been the whole history of every worth while human endeavor from the time it started. So let's turn environmentalists from an epidemic into an endeavor, an effort, an exercise in betterment in every possible way.

## Exercise In Betterment

In forestry this means growing more trees, protecting them better, harvesting them better and using them better. It means taking the trees from the woods and reconstructing them in town as better homes, happier homes, more beautiful homes, so that the environment of the city is just as attractive as the environment of the forest. Let's make people realize that we can't have one without the other. Let's make them realize too that, it is forest products that pay the bill for the environmental efforts of forestry on the land, there are many bonuses. There are healthy water sheds, attractive countryside, favorable wildlife habitat and opportunity for every kind of outdoor play and relaxation. Let's quit trying to parcel up America into a bunch of little single use cells, because this way the cancer of environmentalist will destroy every bit, one by one, and ultimately kill the whole organism which is life itself. Let's make people understand that multiple use is not a myth, but that it is environmental service of the highest type and with the most promise for taking care, nay, improving the lot of mankind.

Col. W. B. Greeley, the greatest forester to come down the pike in our nation to date, almost glorified the stubble of the timber harvest when, in commenting on the passing of the virgin Lakes States pineries, in his book "Forests and Men", he said; "They're standing yet in the Midwestern farms as the homes for the people and animals that made America the best fed country on earth".

The same philosophy could well be expressed by continuing the list of "best" categories of America by including "housed", "educated" and "illustrated" and wood has been responsible for them all.

### Worn-out Cliches Repeated

So we logged half a billion acres of virgin forest and built a country with it. Now we are growing trees on a half billion acres to keep a country growing and strong. Today the exponents of environmentalist do their best to detract from our efforts on the land. They use the worn-out old cliches of timber baron days by regurgitating about "greedy lumbermen," "nasty profits," "stump manufacturers", "wanton wastrels" and "timber miners". They never identify the men who make the forest industry go as tree planters and growers, tree protectors, employers, home builders, tax payers, multiple use managers and responsible citizens in everything they do. They have us logging off the slopes of the glaciers in or above timberline in national parks. They take pictures right after logging and print them five years later when a current picture would show the new trees growing through the stubble of the harvest. They accuse us of all

sorts of destructive practices and even get some professors and pseudo scientists to take obscure studies and blow them up as if they were applicable to the whole half billion acres of American forests. Some even say "who is to deny a tree the chance to die", but they never equate that death with an act of forestry which could salvage the tree before its death and thus improve the environment of Man in some big eastern city ghetto.

An example of the environmentalist epidemic appeared recently in two widely reprinted articles by Gladwin Hill of the New York Times News Service in which the Forest Service was charged with doing a poor job in managing the National Forests. The author then, by the tried and true propaganda tactic of "guilt by association", criticized all forestry in the United States by damning clear-cutting, making fun of the term "harvesting" and trying to make a case for Federal regulation of the management of all forest lands. The articles failed to tell the public that timber "harvesting" is only done to meet the needs of people for building, packaging and communications materials and that America's forests are its only renewable source of these essentials of life. What an up-hill job the forestry profession, the public forestry agencies and the forest industry have in front of them to make a new generation understand that forestry is good for them like it was for their parents and grandparents and, more important yet, for their children because as the nonrenewable resources of the earth are used up the renewable ones, like wood, become all the more important.

### Misrepresentation Must Be Stopped

The environmentalist epidemic has swept our country from the halls of Congress to weekly newspapers. It has been a viable movement, carefully conceived, cultivated and campaigned. Its tools have been detraction, deception, derogation and demagoguery. Its results have been chaos, conflict, confusion and contention, as the urban folk, from student to senior citizen, have been sold a bill of goods which indicts forestry as something bad instead of something good for land and for people. Ever present, the environmentalist epidemic must be stopped unless we want to be guilty of helping bring about the death of the wonderful country we call America and the future role it has to play as the inspirational leader of all the peoples of this world who have looked now for nearly 200 years to our great experiment in environment political, social, economic and moral. We who grow the trees have a pretty important part to play in stemming this epidemic because of our greatest asset the renewability of our remarkable resource.

