

History of Wildlife Management

Study Units

[Wildlife Management](#); [People and Wildlife](#)

Supplemental Information

See [Wildlife Management](#) for history on wildlife management in Iowa and present forms of wildlife management, research, and population monitoring and modeling. [People and Wildlife](#) includes information on natural resource agencies, funding sources, and non-governmental groups involved in resource management.

Iowa is home to Aldo Leopold, considered by some to be the father of wildlife management. He was among the first to clearly communicate ideas of habitat conservation and restoration for the continuing health of wildlife populations. His book, *A Sand County Almanac*, written in story form, illustrates the importance of wildlife. In 1948, he wrote:

“There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. These essays are the delights and dilemmas of one who cannot. Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher ‘standard of living’ is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech.”

A historical look at wildlife management will help students identify changes in public attitudes as reflected in the development of the myriad of agencies and organizations now working to conserve natural resources. Leopold felt he was in the minority in his enjoyment of watching nature. Wildlife watching has become a very popular activity, so much so that the [Outdoor Foundation annually surveys individuals on their outdoor recreation activities](#) including wildlife watching and other ‘enjoying nature’ uses. (For a nice summary of the survey, read the topline reports and if you are looking for more detail read the participation report for the latest year.) As people seek their own balance, visits to natural areas are on the rise. People find solace in quiet nature.

*“In the decades to come, it will not be only the buffalo and the trumpeter swan who need sanctuaries. Our own species is going to need them too. It needs them now.” ~ Wallace Stegner, from the essay ‘The Marks of Human Passage’ in *This is Dinosaur. Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers*, 1955.*

Teaching Suggestions

See [People and Wildlife](#) for contact information and web pages for various agencies and organizations in Iowa. Every county in Iowa has a [county conservation board](#) (CCB). Staff with these local agencies may be good starting points for student research.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources oversees wildlife management statewide and has [regional biologists](#). The [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) has national jurisdiction. There are many private non-



profit organizations that specialize in species or issues. Have students use the [Agency / Organization Profile](#) to organize their research. Invite a natural resources professional to speak to your class. Sources include the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, county conservation boards, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, private conservation organizations, and others. Check [People and Wildlife](#) for contact information.

Evaluation

See the activity.

Student Materials

Agency / Organization Profile

Teacher Aids

None

Additional Materials

- Leopold, A. 1949. *A Sand County Almanac, and Sketches Here and There*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Learn more about [A Sand County Almanac](#), the [Leopold Education Project](#), and [Aldo Leopold](#) from the Aldo Leopold Foundation.
- [Outdoor Foundation](#) outdoor recreation participation survey



Agency / Organization Profile

Agency / Organization name	
When and why formed	
Responsibilities	
Objectives	
Major programs	
Trends in practices over time	



Agency / Organization name	
Funding Sources	
Changes in funding over time	
Important laws or regulations	
Most Difficult problems	
What citizens can do to assist	

