

Subject: : Conservation

Topic: : Blue Herons

Re: Blue Herons

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URL:

Well, I agree with a broader approach, and that we have been a little too narrow minded in the past (and still are, but not as much as before). I would argue that this is just man figuring out a better way to do what they've been trying to do all along. The reasons haven't changed, it was, and still is, for the betterment of humans. What has changed is the methods, and they continue to evolve.

Consider that our definition of a healthy habitat is created by humans, based on what we think is best for our own long-term interests. Nature could really care less whether there's 10 mayfly species in a stream or over 100.

There are a lot of contradictory statements in your philosophy. You talk about creating and restoring habitat, and then argue that nature does better than man. It's man that's creating and restoring (actually, improving, not restoring) that habitat. Nature has no "preferred state", it is based on what would happen with the current status quo if man were not to intercede. You also argue that we could hunt and fish without worrying about jacking up wildlife populations. Generally, fishing and especially hunting regulations are designed to do the exact opposite, to prevent overpopulation.

When we "restore" a watershed, we are not restoring it to its former self, too much has changed to do that. Our forests are different, the animal species are different. It is quite certain that it would never return to its former self even in thousands of years, much less on a time scale we can observe. We are attempting to improve the habitat from its current self from the point of view of mankind, not restore it to a former self. More often than not, when we perceive an improvement, it is due to human intervention, not nature "fixing" itself, because nature doesn't see itself as broken.

As for preventative actions, like the Clean Water Act, they are efforts to change the manner of man's impact so that our resources are more beneficial to man. Typically that impact is just put onto something else, for instance containing, transporting, and storing waste rather than putting it into a stream has its own detrimental impacts. If we deem the new situation better, then the effort succeeded.