Wildlife Management

- Key definitions and concepts
- Goals of wildlife management
- North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

Wildlife Management Triangle

How Do We Define Wildlife?

- USFWS - any wild animal, whether alive or dead, including any wild mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, fish, mollusk (i.e. clam, snail, squid, octopus), crustacean (i.e. crab, lobster, crayfish), insect, sponges, corals, or other invertebrate, whether or not bred, hatched, or born in captivity, and including any part, product (including manufactured products and processed food products), egg, or offspring.
How Do We Define Wildlife?
- TPWD – any wild animal, wild bird, and aquatic life.
- What about high fences? Are they still wildlife?
  - 15,000 ac vs. 500 ac
- White-tailed deer breeding facilities?
- What about exotic species like feral hogs?
  - Legally feral hogs are free roaming livestock.
  - If they are on your property, they belong to you!

What is Wildlife Management?
- The manipulation or protection of wildlife populations and their habitat to achieve a desired goal.

What is Habitat?
- Food
- Water
- Cover
- Usable Space
What is Habitat Management?

- The science and practice of manipulating the arrangement and availability of **food**, **water**, and **cover** to achieve a management goal.

Leopold's Tool Box:

Ax  Fire  Gun
Cow  Plow

Goals of Management

- Make it increase. ↔ T&E species
- Make it decrease. ↔ Feral hogs
- Harvest it for a sustained yield. ↔ White-tailed deer, quail, & turkey
- Leave it alone but keep an eye on it. ↔ Migratory song birds

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

- Seven Pillars
  1. Wildlife as a Public Trust Resource
  2. Elimination of Markets for Game
  3. Allocation of Wildlife by Law
  4. Kill Only for Legitimate Purpose
  5. Wildlife as an International Resource
  7. Democracy of Hunting
Wildlife as a Public Trust

- Wildlife is owned by no one and is held by government in trust for the benefit of present and future generations.
- Historically, wildlife was owned by the elite and was not available to common people.

Elimination of Markets for Game

- Unregulated and unsustainable exploitation of wildlife led to species decline and in some cases extinction.
- Brought about laws that greatly restricted the sale of meat and parts from wildlife.

Allocation of Wildlife by Law

- Laws and regulations established bag limits, seasons, for game species and protected other species because of their imperiled status.

Pile of Bison Skulls circa 1890.
Kill Only for Legitimate Purpose

- 13 states and provinces have “wanton waste” laws requiring hunters to salvage as much meat as possible from harvested game.
- Food, fur, self-defense and property protection are generally acceptable reasons for the taking of wildlife.

Wildlife as an International Resource

- Wildlife do not recognize international or political borders.
- Therefore, the management of species in one country can affect the management of the same species in neighboring countries.
- Migratory bird species.
- CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)

Science-based Wildlife Policy

- We must use science to drive our wildlife policies.
- Adaptive management and waterfowl harvest.
- Increasing public skepticism and lack of funding threaten science-based management.
Democracy of Hunting

- A belief that all people should have access to hunting opportunities.
- Not just the wealthy and privileged.
- Can this be said of your state or country?
- Texas is largely privately owned. Access to public hunting areas can be highly competitive. Access to private hunting areas can be expensive.
- Is there still a democracy of hunting in Texas?