

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation was created to protect the beauty of the wildlife in North America, while still allowing hunters to do what they love. During the time when settlers were expanding Westward, the wildlife population of North American game animals, such as bison and beaver, began to diminish due to the massive market for fur, meat, and other animal products. Many habitats were destroyed when the settlers moved in and began to cultivate the land for their own purposes.

The North American Wildlife Conservation Model is the backbone of wildlife conservation in the United States. This model has seven different principles that are very important, but to summarize them, all Americans have a claim on the fish and wildlife, and that wildlife population needs to be managed in a way that is sustainable indefinitely. Organizations such as the Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and many others use the model to work with state and federal authorities to protect habitat, and create and enforce laws to protect wildlife. Without this, the population of game animals would collapse to over eager hunters who don't consider what unfettered hunting would do to wildlife as a whole. Hunting isn't a bad thing, if done in the correct proportions. It can stop overpopulation, which will keep herds of animals from over stressing their own food supplies. It is much more humane to thin out some of the wildlife when it is warm, than to let them all starve when winter is upon them.

But why is wildlife conservation important? It enhances the experience of hunters, hikers, photographers, and generally all Americans who enjoy the outdoors. As an animal enthusiast, I simply adore almost all things living, especially the birds of prey that I see as I explore the outdoors. I also enjoy the thrill of the few hunts I have been on, trekking through the wilderness and rugged terrain to finally see the target in my sights. Someday, I wish to be able to take my own children and grandchildren, and share with them all the wildlife experience that I am able to enjoy, and maybe even pass on a favorite rifle.