

Aldo Leopold

CONSULTING FORESTER

Madison, Wisconsin

Paul L. Errington
Iowa State College
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Soils Building
March 20, 1933

Dear Paul:

I am sending the paper on to Dr. Wagner and Dr. Cole as you suggest. I have only one suggestion, which should have occurred to me at the previous readings, but didn't. You have not explained why the field has not been "exhausted". You touch on this at the top of p. 12 but not in words which any Sophomore will understand. I suggest you replace the last two pages with some such paragraph as this:

Since the time of Audubon hundreds of careers have been devoted to the natural history of the hundreds of vertebrate species which we now designate as our American "Wild-life". It may not be clear to the prospective student just why one more career should have opportunities which the others lacked.

The answer is this: the earlier work was devoted almost entirely to classifying these species and determining their place in the evolutionary order. Then came a period devoted to the study of their economic relationships. The time is now at hand to study their environmental relationships, so that their numbers, and thus their economic and recreational values, can be intelligently conserved. Deliberate control of wild-life environment for conservation purposes began less than a decade ago. Barely a dozen species have been touched upon from this angle. There is not a woodlot or hedgerow in America which does not raise some question, untouched by the mind of man, but vital to a harmonious relationship between civilization and nature. These questions are the field of wild-life research.

You might want to develop this at even greater length. I feel absolutely sure that most students and not a few biological professors need to be told this to-us self evident fact.

Yours as ever

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