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William Alverson, Walter Kuhlmann, and Donald Waller. WILD FORESTS, CONSERVATION BIOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY. Foreword by Jared Diamond. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1994. 300 p., US\$49.95 cloth ISBN: 1-55963-187-2, \$29.95 paper ISBN: 1-55963-188-0.

WILD FORESTS, CONSERVATION BIOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY, by William Alverson, Walter Kuhlmann, and Donald Waller, is a thoughtful blend of science and public policy. The authors provide a summary of U.S. forest management practices and then identify tools to ensure that biodiversity is included in future planning. The reader should set aside prior views on forests and planning and maintain an open mind about the evidence and ideas presented.

WILD FORESTS tackles the global problem of diminishing forest biodiversity by looking at forest management in the United States. The book focuses on historic and current forest practices, what is known and not known about ecological systems, and what must be done to integrate conservation biology into forest planning. In the end, the authors build a strong case for the Forest Service to take meaningful steps in integrating the principles of conservation biology into national forest planning.

Part 1 of WILD FORESTS explores past, present, and future aspects of forest management in relation to biodiversity conservation. Patterns of deforestation in North America over the last three centuries and the associated changes in forest management, which contributed to large losses in biological diversity, are examined. Alternative practices that could be used to protect diversity are also discussed.

Part 2 reviews some of what is known about the loss or gain of diversity in ecological systems. Threats to diversity discussed include the disruption of historic disturbance patterns and forest habitat fragmentation.

Part 3 shifts from ecological mechanisms to forestry management. Here, contemporary forestry, and the presumption it poses no threat to long term sustainability and wildlife, is discussed. The concept of "Multiple Use," as applied by the Forest Service, is also defined and analyzed in depth. In addition, the authors introduce their prescription for designating areas of "Dominant Use Zoning" (DUZ) for large biological reserves. This model is compared with other forest management tools.

Part 4 is devoted to questions of policy and implementation. Key aspects of Forest Service guidance and management responsibilities are used to demonstrate a lack of agency concern about diversity and to show how science should guide policy. The book concludes with specific recommendations as to how U.S. laws and institutions could be modified to improve understanding of ecological dynamics and protect biodiversity.

The authors' concern for protecting biological diversity and deep regard for the Great Lakes' northern forests gave rise to this book. The heart of WILD FORESTS is a case history of Wisconsin forest planning in the 1980s. The study provides a detailed look at the Forest Service practice of high level landscape disturbance and management for selected species. The position that such practice is adequate for diversity

considerations is being strongly tested by a diverse task force proposing an alternative DUZ plan. This plan provides for a multiple-use strategy which emphasizes biodiversity protection and is consistent with new Forest Service models mitigating the negative effects of timber harvesting. The authors conclude that biodiversity protection in forests can be best achieved by restoring natural ecological processes over large areas. This is accomplished through largely passive management methods. Not surprisingly, such concepts have met with resistance from Forest Service administrators.

In the book's forward, Jared Diamond, longtime biodiversity researcher, praises its authors for producing a gripping case history of the dilemma facing forest managers. While I can't agree with Diamond that the story has the elements of a thriller novel, the concise writing style and use of facts does make it compelling reading. In the end, WILD FORESTS serves as a valuable reference for forest/biodiversity issues and is a must read for local and regional forest planning. Highly recommended for academic and public libraries as well as individuals involved in biodiversity or forest planning.