



The Greenfront Niall Clancy

“The ‘greenfront,’ like the warfront, is where the real action is. Where battles are won or lost. It’s where conservationists work to protect fish and wildlife. “

But unlike the warfront, soldiers on the greenfront wear an armor of attitudes...their own and those around them. It allows them to survive the forces that so often do not care for the natural world. Cultivating a band of loyal compatriots is an important aspect of that armor, a group that will go to battle for the cause you represent. It’s these folks that allow conservationists to move forward despite opposition from more vocal segments of a community, and the apathy of the majority. It’s also why the ethic of the cause must be upheld. Just like in wartime, people will only support a cause if they believe in the values it proclaims to uphold. It’s why utilitarian motives for international conflicts are always couched in terms of humanitarian ideals. It’s why destruction of the natural world is couched in terms of ‘job creation’ instead of the utilitarianism of corporate profit. But conservation does not need to be couched in terms of ecosystem services or future economic benefit. The cause is worthy of its own virtue and will draw supporters if sustained. Despite this, many of us feel beholden to the opinions of those who would seek to use our fish and wildlife and its habitat for their own profit. To some extent, we are. Many biologists are employed by state or federal agencies whose ultimate aim is to carry out what is in the best interest of the public. But that best interest is not necessarily reflected in the statements of those without an ecological education. To serve the public does not mean only those who are most vocal but also the silent majority, present and future, in whose best interest it is to preserve the natural world.

Profit is temporary, nature is not. I therefore echo the sentiments of David Schmetterling who, in his presentation at last month’s Western Division meeting, urged us to be advocates for the resources we manage. Advocacy by management in this regard is no crime. To the contrary, it is a requirement. If those tasked with preserving nature do not advocate for that preservation, how will any band of loyal advocates form in the first place? There must be a nucleus for any movement to form around. A call to arms to rally the troops. So, I urge you to be that steadfast defender of the native fish and wildlife that is so desperately needed.

Wild Trout Symposium XII

September 26-29, 2017

West Yellowstone, Montana



“Science, Politics, and Wild Trout Management: Who’s Driving and Where Are We Going?” There will be a plenary session that will address the roles of science and politics in wild trout management, to help provide decision makers at all levels with a better understanding for the dynamics among science, politics, and management. A session on trout conservation genetics and genomics in tribute to Dr. Tim King; wild trout population dynamics and ecology; native trout conservation; nonnative fishes and tools for native trout management; and sessions on stream habitat management, including traditional and new approaches and a look at threats to stream habitat.

More information—www.wildtroutsymposium.com