

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation

In the first two decades of the 20th century, sportsmen from the United States and Canada developed a set of guiding principles for managing wildlife resources. Called the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, these seven principles provide the foundation for the success of fish and wildlife conservation in North America.

- Wildlife is public property. The government holds wildlife in trust for the benefit of all people.
- Wildlife cannot be slaughtered for commercial use. This policy eliminates trafficking in dead game animals.
- Wildlife is allocated by law. Every citizen in good standing—regardless of wealth, social standing, or land ownership—is allowed to participate in the harvest of fish and wildlife within guidelines set by lawmakers.
- Wildlife shall be taken by legal and ethical means, in the spirit of "fair chase," and with good cause. Animals can be killed only for legitimate purposes—for food and fur, in self-defense, or for protection of property.
- Wildlife is an international resource. As such, hunting and fishing shall be managed cooperatively across state and province boundaries.
- Wildlife management, use, and conservation shall be based on sound scientific knowledge and principles.
- Hunting, fishing, and trapping shall be democratic. This gives all persons — rich and poor alike—the opportunity to participate.