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Politics, Policy, and the War in the Woods

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As the new century begins, a war is being waged over the forests of British Columbia and the US Pacific Northwest. The clash between combatants, motivated by radically different worldviews and opposing interests, has seemed to be unending and has occasionally erupted in violence. It has given impetus to a polarized and unproductive political debate that has failed to do justice to the richness and beauty of the forests of this region. Our purpose in this book is to blur the battle lines and to offer a less polarized view of forest politics in the region. In doing so, we hope to clarify the bases for the war in these woods and to suggest alternative ways of seeing, discussing, and managing forestry conflict.

While numerous authors¹ have examined the sources of forestry conflict, this collection offers two unique contributions. First, it examines forest policy in the context of a binational region, highlighting how two political systems facing similar cultural and economic challenges have treated their forests. During the past fifty years, British Columbia has constructed a system of expansive public ownership of forest land yet has delegated much managerial control to private entities (Wilson 1998). In contrast, the United States has developed a system of mixed ownership and a tradition of public involvement, even in decisions about private forest land (Dana and Fairfax 1980). The contributors to this collection analyze how these two systems have responded to demands associated with increased competition in global markets for timber and wood products, new findings in environmental research, and growing political pressure for protection of forest environments. Thus, readers are offered views of how political and economic institutions shape conflict and respond to pressure for change. The book examines the extent to which policy makers are constrained by institutional structures and global forces and how these institutions can be altered to serve new public ends.

Second, this book contributes to the forest politics discussion by highlighting the perspectives of those whose voices are often unheard in forest

policy debate. Many observers characterize forest/environmental conflict as two-sided.² The inclusion of Indigenous people, nonindustrial owners of forest land, community-based activists, and nontimber forest workers makes the picture more complex. Adding these perspectives makes the lines of cleavage less sharp and offers the possibility of breaking open what too often has been a one-dimensional and polarized set of arguments.

It is conventional to see the war in the woods as pitting two coalitions against one another. On one side are forest industry officials and workers, rural communities, and forestry professionals. These sectors are seen as united in their defence of agro-industrial forestry, private property rights, and a liberal capitalist political economy. Across the barricades are environmentalists, both those who reside in urban areas and those who have moved back to the land. They promote ecoforestry, communal forms of land tenure, and participatory democratic institutions.

The combatants are thought to offer radically different visions of how our forests should look and which functions they should perform. Should they be vast green factories, producing fibre at ever faster rates? This agro-industrial vision relies on the use of technology to increase the efficiency of fibre production and to promote the region's competitiveness in global markets. This vision guided commercial forest management in North America for much of the last half of the twentieth century.³ In part, Clark Binkley's analysis (Chapter 7) of the evolution of forest exploitation fits within this tradition. Binkley calls for zoning forests so that a small portion of the land base can be managed intensively to produce wood, while the remainder can provide other ecosystem services. His call to segregate production into land-use zones elaborates the agro-industrial model to accommodate the increasing and conflicting demands on the forest.⁴ An alternative vision is of an ecological forestry that sees the forest as a home (Drengson and Taylor 1997; M'Gonigle and Parfitt 1994). According to this view, tending the forest should make it a safe home for all the species found there, from marbled murrelets to organic farmers. Biological diversity is the central value. Proponents of ecoforestry argue for vast reserves, or wild areas, that will not be subject to resource extraction.

This depiction of the conflict is accurate to some extent. There are two competing and polarized visions. But this portrayal glosses over important differences between actors in the two coalitions and leaves out other actors altogether. Even though observers often speak of the forest industry, or the timber sector, the nature of one's political economic claim on the forest shapes one's perspective on policy. In the United States, the policy interests of those who own forest land are not necessarily congruent with those of organizations that own manufacturing facilities. Neal Wilkins (Chapter 8) describes how a land-based company has responded to federal requirements to protect the habitats of endangered species. Such

companies have little stake in the level of timber cut allocated to federal forests but are very much engaged in policy making related to private land. Similarly, independent loggers in British Columbia do not necessarily share policy interests with multinational paper companies. Lumping such disparate actors into a single category results in simplistic analysis and polarized politics.

Even within the relatively narrow sector of companies with global investments in land and processing facilities, important political and policy differences have emerged. Ben Cashore, Ilan Vertinsky, and Rachana Raizada (Chapter 4) take this observation further by examining three forest companies' responses to environmentalist pressure. These authors illustrate the importance of intrasectoral analysis; political strategies and public policies that treat forest companies uniformly will miss the leverage that can be obtained by recognizing their differences. Tom Waggener's chapter (3) highlights the global economic forces that are reshaping the political economy of forests on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel. Waggener notes that, although many of these changes will have similar consequences in both jurisdictions, others will have different effects.

Those left out of the one-dimensional view of forest politics include Indigenous peoples, who have articulated a model of forestry with both economic development and cultural integrity as goals (Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound 1995). While some Indigenous people have taken positions on each side of the forest divide, others have transcended it (Nathan 1993). But perhaps the key priority of Indigenous leaders, which is apparent in David Boyd and Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson's chapter (5), is sovereignty. Although Boyd and Williams-Davidson argue that Native control of forests will promote a more sustainable and ecological forestry,⁵ they do not condition their call for Native ownership rights on compliance with ecological goals.

Similarly, workers in what Beverly Brown (Chapter 6) terms the forest-floor economy have complex interests in the management of trees. Brown argues that efforts to achieve more local control of forest management⁶ in the Pacific Northwest may further marginalize nontimber forest workers. Because many of these workers are recent immigrants, and many are not tied to geographically defined communities, local decision-making processes may exclude their participation and neglect their interests. If these workers' interests are to be addressed, then policy makers must find ways to facilitate their participation. Brown argues forcefully that failure to include nontimber forest workers will perpetuate injustice and undermine democracy.

Finally, many residents of timber-dependent rural communities are adopting new approaches in trying to forge truces in the war in the woods. There are many examples of multistakeholder deliberative processes in

the region. Citizen-initiated processes include the Collaborative Learning Circle (southwest Oregon and northern California), the Quincy Library Group (northern California), and the Skagit Watershed Council (northwest Washington). These networks of community-based organizations demonstrate that environmentalists, fishers, and timber industry managers and workers can agree on forest practices in specific cases if not on the general principles that ought to guide forest management. The common thread in these processes is the belief that communities are threatened and that inclusive, community-based democratic processes should result in solutions. The conversation in which participants in these community-initiated processes have engaged illustrates that discourse about forests can be multidimensional and that actual forest practices can reconcile conflicting abstractions.

In contrast to citizen-initiated multistakeholder processes are those organized by governments. Oregon's watershed councils are a state response to concerns about degradation of salmon habitat. British Columbia's Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE) was a provincial response to forest conflict. In Chapter 9, Mae Burrows examines the latter and argues that these processes, although viewed as open and inclusive, perpetuate inequality in the distribution of power.

It is clear that, if the forests of the Pacific coast are to be sustained, then the preferences of numerous actors will have to be integrated into policy making. For this to happen, inequality and conflict must be confronted. Romm (1993) has argued that sustainability is a political concept. What is to be sustained is determined by social values, and in nearly every management context there will be conflicting values. Some people will want forests to sustain outputs of commodity resources; others will focus on sustaining wildlife, recreational opportunities, or ecosystem processes. Moreover, the extent to which various actors are able to achieve, or even voice, their preferences depends on the distribution of political power. It is in confronting both conflict and inequality that our political institutions gain the capacity to become instruments of sustainability.

The contributors to this volume offer perspectives on forest conflict and sustainability that recognize the complexity of the issues and the diversity of interests in forest politics. These analyses suggest that hope may be found in recognizing cross-cutting values and interests as well as in being willing to imagine alternative, and often small-scale, democratic experiments. But conflict retains a central place in these analyses. Moreover, conflict has developed in two jurisdictions with different political systems but with similar cultural values and forest ecosystems. But conflict is not contained within state, provincial, or national jurisdictions, since many of the key actors operate in binational and international contexts and since global economic forces influence the terms of debate. Thus, although forest

politics is increasingly played out across international boundaries, public policy solutions are constrained and channelled by domestic political systems. In the remainder of this chapter, we focus on the key attributes of those political systems, on several issues that have provoked controversy, and on the ways in which governments have responded to them.

Institutional Setting

Although the actors and the issues are similar on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel, the systems of government are very different. Each form of government uniquely shapes the political environment in which forest politics takes place.

The Canadian parliamentary system concentrates power in the political executive, which consists of the prime minister and cabinet in the federal government and the premiers and cabinets in the provincial governments. Unlike in the United States, where the separation of powers invites rivalry and competition between the executive and legislative branches, this conflict is virtually nonexistent in the Canadian federal government and in the provinces. The parliamentary system is based on the principle of responsible government, in which cabinets are formed and survive based on majority support in the legislature. Following an election, the leader of the political party with the most seats in the legislature assumes the position of prime minister (premier in the provinces) and appoints a number of elected members of his or her party to the cabinet. The prime minister of Canada, the provincial premiers, and their respective cabinets are also members of the legislative body, sitting in on and directing the activities of the assemblies. If cabinet ministers lose the confidence of a majority in the legislature, then they are expected to resign, and an election is called. In practice, cabinets rarely lose the support of the legislature because of the discipline imposed on the members by political parties. Strong party discipline provides the prime minister and cabinet with the tools to effectively lead the government and dominate policy making.

The structure of government is very different in the United States. The congressional system divides power over policy making between rival branches: the executive and the legislature. Each branch's institutional power is entrenched by the Constitution. Independence of and competition between the branches is encouraged by separate systems of election and different terms of office. Unlike in the parliamentary system, power is diffused across the branches rather than concentrated in the executive. Relatively weak party discipline makes it impossible for the president in the national government or governors in states to dominate policy making. Members of Congress and state legislatures secure positions of power by chairing committees that control the substance and flow of legislation. Although the popularly elected president and state governors have a decided

advantage in directing the policy process, the system of separated institutions sharing power puts a premium on negotiating as a political style. George Hoberg, in his chapter (2), highlights the importance of the separation of powers model in the United States in shaping a policy process that has been more open than the BC system to environmentalists' demands for preservation of old-growth forests.

State governors typically share power with powerful legislators and other independently elected state officials. The legislature represents a rival power centre, and in Washington and Oregon states some heads of executive departments are elected and often belong to a different party than the governor. Thus, although the governor holds centre stage, he or she is at best only first among equals (Scott 1992). In contrast, the premier in British Columbia is the undisputed head of the executive branch by virtue of the power to appoint all members of the cabinet. The absence of powerful institutions to check premiers and prime ministers in the Canadian system results in executive-centred government. Regardless of which party is in power, the premier and the cabinet have an exceptionally high degree of control over the province.

Both Canada and the United States are federal systems, but they have significant differences that bear directly on forest politics. In terms of each federal system, provinces in general are more powerful than states. In Canada, provincial ownership of natural resources ensures that provinces are the key players in resource policy. Provincial control over forest resources makes for a close relationship between the BC government and the forest industry with regard to access to and management of the resource. Federal government involvement is primarily in the trade of forest products, a critical part of the BC economy. Thus, the provincial government inevitably must be reconciled with federal international trade interests. In the United States, a significant portion of forested land is owned by the federal government. Hence, it is directly responsible for the management of national forests in states. As a result, agencies, congressional committees, and the courts have become directly involved in forest policy in Washington, Oregon, and other states that contain federal public land.

In Washington and Oregon, forest land is divided among federal, state, and private holdings. These differing patterns of land ownership make for quite different policy and management approaches on these lands. The differences and relationships among jurisdictional agendas and policies are important in structuring forest politics in the United States.

Political Culture Context

The two jurisdictions may also be compared in terms of political culture. We use the term political culture to refer to the broad pattern of values and

attitudes that defines the conditions for political action and guides and gives meaning to political behaviour.⁷ Although political culture consists of largely unspoken attitudes, they affect how citizens make demands on the system and determine their orientations toward the decision-making apparatus, policy outputs, and the overall political community (Dyck 1993).

Research has shown that populism and polarization are significant features of BC political culture (Blake, Guppy, and Urmetzer 1996-97). Populism refers to the belief that “the people” should participate in political and economic decisions that will affect their lives. Embedded in the populist mind-set is suspicion of bureaucrats and “experts,” trust in popular government, and belief in grassroots participation in setting directions for public policy and morality (Elkins 1985: 62). The fact that populist sentiments are a significant part of the provincial pattern of values is advanced as a major explanation of the continuing success of nonestablishment political parties in British Columbia (Blake 1996). Populism is also a key element of environmentalism in the province (Salazar and Alper 1999). Environmentalists who portray government forest policy and the Ministry of Forests as unaccountable to the public draw on populist rhetoric.

Observers of BC politics have noted for years the severe ideological polarization in the province. This historical rivalry between right and left is rooted in the traditional resource-based economy and the class conflict that it spawned (Black 1968; Robin 1972). In recent decades, the rise of the service economy and a growing postmaterialist ethos centred on environmentalism have substantially transformed class divisions (Howlett and Brownsey 1992). However, the bipolar structure of the BC party system remains in place, and political discourse continues to reflect left/right rhetoric (Blake 1996). Thus, while environmentalists articulate a politics that looks past (some might say ignores) conventional class divisions, BC political parties continue to see a world where the key actors are business, labour, and the state (Salazar and Alper 1996).

In recent years, ecology-oriented values have become an important part of BC political culture (Blake 1996; Blake, Guppy, and Urmetzer 1996-97; Harrison 1996). Support for environmentalism transcends social classes but is disproportionately located among supporters of parties on the left. Environmentalism also invokes populist values such as a belief in direct citizen action and opposition to professional bureaucrats and politicians. Conflict over forest practices has strengthened environmental consciousness and pushed environmental issues to the forefront of the province’s political agenda.

The political cultures of the states in the Pacific Northwest are infused with strong populist values as well as the ideas of the progressive movement, which set deep roots in the political systems of most western states in the early part of the twentieth century. Like populism, progressivism is

deeply suspicious of political and economic elites. The view that “self-serving” governors and legislatures are dangerous and need to be buffered with popular decision-making processes is at the heart of progressivism. In both Washington and Oregon, the progressive influence is reflected in public utility districts, apolitical commissions and boards, and direct-democracy practices such as initiatives and referenda (Mason 1994; Treleven 1997).

Progressive and populist beliefs differ on the role of experts. Progressivism maintains that politics can and should be transformed into “administration” in which decisions are made on the basis of expertise and not compromise and negotiation. Central to progressivist values is the belief that nonpartisan administration is preferable to partisan government. Progressivism’s faith in expertise has shaped federal forest management in the United States (Hays 1959). The Forest Service, which manages the vast majority of federal forest land in the region, has a long tradition of autonomy from political control. But during the past several decades, environmentalists have challenged the values and practices of agency foresters (Twight and Lyden 1988). Much of the conflict between these citizen activists and agency officials has its roots in the conflicting priorities of populism and progressivism.

Daniel Elazar (1984), in differentiating political cultures among states, identified Washington and Oregon as moralistic/individualistic political cultures. According to this categorization, the political system is seen as an arena for solving social problems that is also highly vulnerable to the machinations of powerful economic and political interests. Politics is seen ideally as a matter of concern for all citizens, not just those committed to professional political careers. This kind of political culture embraces the notion that every citizen should participate in civic activity. As a result, states with moralistic political cultures are more willing to place controls on interest groups and state officials and are more likely to adopt campaign finance and public disclosure restrictions (Walker 1992). These kinds of requirements have tended to make the political influence of the forest products industry more transparent.

In both Washington and Oregon, political parties are viewed with ambivalence. Both states have competitive party systems, but voters pride themselves on “voting for the person or issue” and not the party. This is consistent with a moralistic political culture in which parties are viewed as vehicles to attain goals believed to be in the public interest (Elazar 1984: 239). Washington is one of only a few states that do not restrict participation in primary elections for selecting party candidates to party members. The blanket primary allows voters to shift among the parties as they vote in nomination contests, and this approach further weakens the bond between voters and parties.

Support for environmental protection is also an important element in the political cultures of Washington and Oregon. Steel, List, and Shindler (1994) and Steel et al. (1995) have found that citizens in Seattle and Spokane, as well as throughout Oregon, have strong biocentric (ecology-oriented) attitudes with regard to forest policy. Consistent with these results, Ellis and Thompson's (1997) study of an Oregon county showed a substantial majority of citizens to be ecologically minded and engaged. These individuals were concerned about the possibility of an environmental catastrophe, unwilling to rely only on science and technology to prevent such catastrophic events, and supportive of expending more public resources to protect and improve the environment. These results from regional samples are consistent with the numerous national studies in the United States that identify the emergence of a broadly based environmental consciousness (Hays 1987; Jones and Dunlap 1992; Kanji 1996; Kempton, Boster, and Hartley 1995).

Key Issues in the Development of Forest Policy Conflict

Changes in cultural values and beliefs about natural resources have given rise to increasing public pressure to preserve and protect forest ecosystems. Respect for nonhuman nature, appreciation of natural beauty and integrity, concern about environmental health risks, and a sense of responsibility to future generations are widely held in North America (Kanji 1996; Kempton, Boster, and Hartley 1995). When these values filter public perceptions of industrial forest management, a picture of destruction and disregard emerges. It is this picture that has motivated many to call for radical changes in forest policy and management.

While the specifics of policy proposals differ on each side of the border, the general outlines of change are similar. Below we describe some of the key issues in the development of forest policy conflict in British Columbia and then in the US Pacific Northwest.

Clear-Cuts in the BC Wilderness⁸

In British Columbia, 94 percent of forest land is provincially owned and is referred to as Crown lands (Council of Forest Industries 1991). The provincial government licenses private companies to harvest trees from Crown forests through a tenure system. This system has been in place since the 1940s, though some licensing arrangements have been modified (Marchak 1983; Wilson 1998).⁹ Licences vary with respect to length, renewability, and the distribution of responsibility for various management functions. Licensees make decisions about how, when, and how much to harvest within broad constraints. Integrated wood products companies control licences to 85 percent of the annual allowable cut in Crown forests (Forest Resources Commission 1991).¹⁰

During the 1980s, several issues provoked broad public discussion of forest policy in British Columbia and set the agenda for almost two decades of political conflict. The first issue was a reforestation backlog on Crown lands during the early 1980s. The second was prompted by Native efforts to settle land claims. The third was the “valley-by-valley” confrontation over clear-cut logging of ancient, or old-growth, forests.

The reforestation backlog became public as the forest industry headed into a severe recession. Forest managers and lay citizens criticized the government for insufficient investment in replanting clear-cut forests. While the reforestation backlog did not generate the same kind of public involvement that subsequent issues did, the problem indicated that the credibility of the forest management system in British Columbia was increasingly in question.

Native land claims and environmentalists’ efforts to preserve ancient forests were intertwined in many of the most contentious forest battles of the 1980s and 1990s. Natives and environmentalists shared an immediate interest in stopping company logging, but their long-term interests often differed. In the Queen Charlotte Islands, local Haida people and environmentalists collaborated to stop logging on the South Moresby archipelago. The Haida acted to defend a land claim; environmentalists wanted to create a wilderness preserve. Both groups participated in litigation followed by other tactics to draw national and international attention to the islands. The Haida blockaded Lyell Island to prevent logging. Environmental organizations lobbied and tried to focus public attention on the Haida. In 1987, the federal government bought the cutting rights, and the federal and provincial governments agreed to create the South Moresby National Park Reserve. The Haida protested the creation of the park because their land claim remained unresolved.

The South Moresby battle was similar to confrontations throughout the province during the 1980s and 1990s. Environmentalists and Indigenous people engaged in litigation, lobbying, and direct action to stop logging of ancient forests. In some areas, environmentalists chained themselves to machinery and camped on platforms placed in trees. Perhaps the most prominent mass action took place in Clayoquot Sound during the summer of 1993, when hundreds of citizens were arrested at blockades for attempting to stop logging. These actions drew international attention to British Columbia’s forests and pushed the provincial government to create forest reserves and to modify management practices in other forests.

The New Democratic Party (NDP) government, which came to power in 1991, took several steps to stop the war in the woods. First, the government recognized Aboriginal title and the inherent right to self-government, thus committing the province to negotiate land claims. Second, in 1992, the premier created the Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE)

to conduct regional land-use planning. At the same time, the minister of forests announced efforts to develop a new Forest Practices Code to regulate harvesting. Third, in 1993, the government initiated a Forest Sector Strategy to plan the industrial development of the forest sector.

These changes were designed to address three issues at the centre of the forest policy debate in British Columbia: the manner in which forests should be harvested, which lands should be subject to timber harvesting, and who should make decisions about forest management.¹¹ The government attempted to resolve the first issue through the Forest Practices Code,¹² enacted in 1994 and revised in 1997. The code creates a structure for the development and enforcement of regional and provincial forest practice regulations (Ministry of Forests 1994). This regulatory structure has received considerable criticism (Cook 1998). Forest operators have criticized the code for its extensive procedural requirements and the costs of compliance. Environmentalists have criticized the discretionary nature of most provisions and the lack of public access to the regulatory process. Struggles over the regulation of harvesting practices are likely to continue.

The second issue was land-use allocation. In its campaign platform, the NDP promised to designate 12 percent of the province's forest lands as "protected ecosystems." The pressure to decide which wild lands to protect was strong because of strains within the NDP constituency, which includes both environmentally minded citizens and wood products labour unions. Once in power, the NDP created CORE to conduct regional land-use planning.

CORE represented a move away from the old approach of ministry edicts toward a new participatory model emphasizing open discussion and the accommodation of different values. CORE established a process in which the province was divided into geographic areas, and the major economic, social, cultural, and governmental sectors in each area sent representative "stakeholders" to the table. The goal was to create a decision-making process that was local, inclusive, and consensual. It was hoped that, by including all stakeholders and providing the resources to develop a plan, the end result would incorporate the full range of values and therefore have greater credibility with the public. Mae Burrows argues in Chapter 9 that CORE failed to be inclusive and that its conception and design ensured that powerful sectors would retain their power and that community-based groups lacking funds and organization would remain disadvantaged. However, George Hoberg portrays CORE in Chapter 2 as a step toward opening up decision-making processes in the BC government and institutionalizing environmental values in forest policy.

The decision by the BC government to discontinue CORE in 1996 signalled diminished interest in shared decision-making approaches to resource issues. The disbanding of CORE also left the province without an overarching monitor of land-use practices (Owen 1998).

Notably, CORE did not address the third issue in the forest policy triad: forest tenure or control. That is, how should property rights be distributed among citizens, licence holders, First Nations, and the provincial government? Tenure issues were to be addressed, if at all, through the Forest Sector Strategy, which focused on the changing economic context of the industry. A twenty-member committee, composed primarily of officials from government, labour, and industry, was charged with developing the strategy.¹³ Yet, as Boyd and Williams-Davidson point out in Chapter 5, recent court decisions support Aboriginal challenges to licence holders involved in logging on lands claimed by First Nations as traditional territories.

In sum, the provincial government has treated forest practice regulation as a technical issue and delegated its resolution to foresters and scientists. Land-use allocation has been managed as a public issue, with public participation invited through stakeholder negotiations. In contrast, tenure reform has been treated as a business issue, with the major forestry economic interests – industry, labour, and government – serving as the primary shapers of policy. The following chapters suggest that none of these structures is likely to contain the fundamental conflicts at the core of forest politics.

Endangered Species and Forests in Oregon and Washington

Unlike in British Columbia, the ownership pattern of US Pacific Northwest forests is varied. Roughly half of the forest land in Oregon and Washington is owned by the federal government (Waddell, Oswald, and Powell 1989).¹⁴ Slightly less than 40 percent is privately owned. In Washington, the state controls 10 percent of forest land, while in Oregon state ownership accounts for 3 percent of forest land. Native American tribes control approximately 6 percent of forest land in Washington.

This mixture of ownership has given rise to a pattern of regulation in which both federal and state governments play major roles. The key laws governing forest management on federal lands include the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Wilderness Act, and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The first two laws govern planning, land-use allocation, and forest practices on federal lands. The third defines congressional authority to designate wilderness areas in which most forms of resource exploitation are proscribed. The ESA authorizes two cabinet departments to designate species as threatened or endangered and requires federal agencies to devise recovery plans for listed species. A key element of forest conflict in the Pacific Northwest has been associated with plans for the recovery of the northern spotted owl and more recently several subspecies of salmon.

State and private lands are subject to some federal statutes, most notably the ESA, and to a number of state laws. The ESA prohibits any landowner

from harming a threatened or endangered species. The regulations implementing the law include land-use practices that might harm listed species. The extent to which the law authorizes the federal government to regulate private land use has been the subject of considerable controversy, resolved by a 1995 Supreme Court decision (*Babbitt v. Sweet Home*, 115 S.Ct. 2407). The court ruled that the Department of Interior could reasonably require landowners to modify their land-use practices to protect the habitat of designated endangered species.¹⁵

Both Oregon and Washington regulate private forestry through their forest practice acts. These laws authorize state agencies (the Department of Forestry in Oregon and the Department of Natural Resources in Washington) to adopt rules to protect public resources associated with private lands. Rules require reforestation after timber harvests and address the protection of soil, water, fish, wildlife, and other resources.

The use and management of forests have been contentious public issues in the Pacific Northwest for more than thirty years. While early conflicts focused on the designation of wilderness areas and the reduction of clear-cut sizes on federal lands, more recently forestry politics has shifted to a contest over the meaning of ecosystem management and the extent to which private lands should serve public ends.

The Politics of Ecosystem Management

In April 1993, just over three months after assuming office, President Clinton went to Portland for a promised forest summit. A series of federal court decisions during the late 1980s and early 1990s had nearly halted logging in the Pacific Northwest. Clinton had vowed to resolve the war in the woods by bringing contending parties together for dialogue that would lead to analysis. The summit took place over the course of one day. The more substantive part of the president's strategy was the appointment of a team of scientists to develop a set of policy options that would satisfy legal requirements for protection of endangered species' habitat and provide wood for the region's mills.¹⁶ The name of the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team (FEMAT) reflected the emerging consensus that forestry on federal lands should be guided by ecosystem management. But the FEMAT report as well as other conferences and reports have revealed considerable diversity of opinion with respect to the meaning of ecosystem management (Soden, Lamb, and Tennert 1998).

At an abstract level, this disagreement reflects contending positions regarding the ethical status of nonhuman nature (Normand and Salazar 1998). For many activists, scientists, and policy analysts, the central priority of ecosystem management is the protection of ecological integrity. This priority derives from both an ecocentric ethic and ecosystem science. Conservation biologists in particular have defined ecosystem management

such that preservation of biological diversity is emphasized (Grumbine 1994). From this perspective, ecosystem management implies a public land system focused primarily on preservation of habitat. In contrast, many public land managers see ecosystem management as a tool for conflict management (Normand and Salazar 1998). For managers, ecosystem management connotes a forest management philosophy committed to the sustainable provision of a range of goods and services. From this perspective, ecosystem management may be used to build broadly based public support for land management plans that provide something for everyone.

In practical terms, contention regarding the meaning of ecosystem management is often reduced to decisions about timber extraction, where, how, and how many trees should be harvested (Calhoun 1998). Indeed, a prominent feature of the 1990s debate about federal forest policy involved contending parties using the authority of ecosystem management to support their positions on timber harvesting. George Hoberg's chapter (2) suggests how political institutional structure has contributed to the outcome of this debate. His analysis focuses on the preservation of old-growth forests, but his approach can certainly be applied to management issues on all parts of the public forest land base.

The Publicness of Private Forests

Private forests have also been contentious subjects of forest politics in the Pacific Northwest (Cashore 1998; Salazar and Cubbage 1990). There are few who challenge the premise that owners of private land have public responsibilities, though the nature and extent of those responsibilities are subject to debate.¹⁷ Regulations for fire control and slash disposal have been in effect for decades. Since the 1970s, Oregon and Washington have regulated activity on private forests to protect water quality and fish habitat. Although there is little private forest land in British Columbia, the nature of tenure arrangements on public land and the use of the Forest Practices Code since 1995 to regulate the practices of tenure holders make for some useful comparisons.

Forest practice regulation on both sides of the border has been driven by arguments about the effects of logging on endangered species and their habitats. In British Columbia, large clear-cuts have made for important qualitative differences in the policy debate. But a key issue in all three jurisdictions – British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon – has been the extent to which the relevant government relies on standardized, nondiscretionary rules to achieve public ends or to create more flexible regulatory processes. In Chapter 8, Neal Wilkins examines one such process, the Habitat Conservation Plan. He draws on his experience as a wildlife biologist for a private timber company to argue that flexibility is essential to securing long-term protection of species and ecosystems. His analysis

provides a point of departure for assessing the BC Forest Practices Code, which environmentalists have argued is so flexible as to be useless.

While policy analysts and political activists have focused on the government's role in securing private sector compliance, few have looked closely at how private forest companies respond to environmental regulation. The Cashore, Vertinsky, and Raizada chapter (4) begins to fill this gap in our understanding. Cashore and his co-authors develop a typology of company responses and suggest political and policy strategies for promoting environmentally sound behaviour by private firms.

Plan of the Book

The chapters in this collection explore multiple dimensions of forestry conflict in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. Organized in five sections, the chapters address key issues in the politics of forestry in the region. Part 2 describes global economic and domestic environmental/political changes that have reframed regional conceptions of sustainability, examines how existing institutions have responded to these changes, and identifies factors that will affect future institutional responses. Part 3 considers the kinds of political and policy concerns raised by the perspectives of Indigenous peoples and nontimber forest workers. Chapters in this section raise important issues of equity, justice, and democracy. The authors of Part 4 explore how policy strategies of land-use zoning, cooperative business-government relations, and multistakeholder processes have been employed to address forest environmental issues. In the final chapter, the editors focus on four issues that consistently emerge in Parts 2, 3, and 4: monitoring, property rights, citizenship, and globalization.

Thus, the following chapters address questions of policy and politics and issues of pragmatic concern and normative commitment. As a whole, the collection analyzes the bases for resource conflict, identifies the institutional structures that circumscribe conflict resolution, outlines some emerging issues that policy makers will need to address, and offers some strategies for sustaining the forests of the region.

Notes

- 1 Recent book-length treatments include Chase (1995); Dietrich (1992); Harris (1995); Parfitt (1998); Wilson (1998); and Yaffee (1994).
- 2 Authors who portray the conflict as a clash between two sets of societal actors/interests include Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle (1998); many of the contributors to Calhoun (1998); Chase (1995); and Wilson (1987-88, 1998).
- 3 See, for example, Day, Hart, and Milstein (1998), a study of Weyerhaeuser.
- 4 Rayner (1998) has noted that, although the idea of zoning has been proposed by those on opposing sides, their conceptions of the purpose of zoning differ. Some see zoning as a way to make forest production more efficient; others see it as a means to protect biological diversity. These two priorities lead to very different zoning maps.

- 5 Their conception of sustainable forest use is consistent with the model of ecoforestry outlined above.
- 6 Local control has been a key priority for some advocates of ecoforestry. See, for example, Burda, Gale, and M'Gonigle (1998).
- 7 See Salazar and Alper (1999) and Ellis and Thompson (1997) for more extended discussions of political culture and its role in environmental conflict.
- 8 The following historical sketch is derived largely from a review of the *Vancouver Sun* during the 1980s and 1990s and from accounts provided during our interviews with more than fifty participants in forest/environmental politics and policy making in British Columbia. Interviews were conducted between 1992 and 1994 and between 1996 and 1998. See Salazar and Alper (1996, 1999) for descriptions of interview subjects and questions.
- 9 See Marchak (1983) for a historical sketch of the development of tenure arrangements.
- 10 See Schwindt and Heaps (1996) for a detailed discussion of the distribution of costs and revenues associated with forest management in British Columbia.
- 11 See Leman (1988) and Tollefson (1998) for a more general analysis of forest policy in Canada.
- 12 Forest practice regulation constrains the processes of growing and harvesting wood to protect environmental values such as water quality and wildlife habitat (Salazar 1989).
- 13 Only one member of the committee had ties to environmental organizations in the province.
- 14 A smaller percentage of commercially available forest is controlled by the federal government, but this amount is in flux as decisions about land use continue to be made.
- 15 See Chapter 8 for a discussion of the implementation of the ESA on private lands.
- 16 For differing perspectives on the summit and the process that followed, see Chase (1995); Durbin (1996); and Rayner (1996).
- 17 In the United States, property rights activists have devoted considerable effort to limiting public regulation of private land use and to securing compensation for opportunities foregone as a result of regulation.

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