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Wildlife and Habitat Management

When we think of wildlife management, generally we think of larger terrestrial and aquatic vertebrates such as birds and mammals. Game species such as white-tailed deer or waterfowl in particular often symbolize wildlife to many. Moreover, many people think of wildlife management only as a way of preserving or saving wildlife. True wildlife management encompasses these factors as well as many others. The term wildlife actually refers to any organism living outside direct human control, including any plants and animals that are not cultivated or domesticated. For conventional purposes, wildlife management can be described as indirectly influencing wildlife populations by altering habitat, food supply, density of competing populations, or occurrence of disease.

In a sense, wildlife management is more of an art than a science. The conventional definition

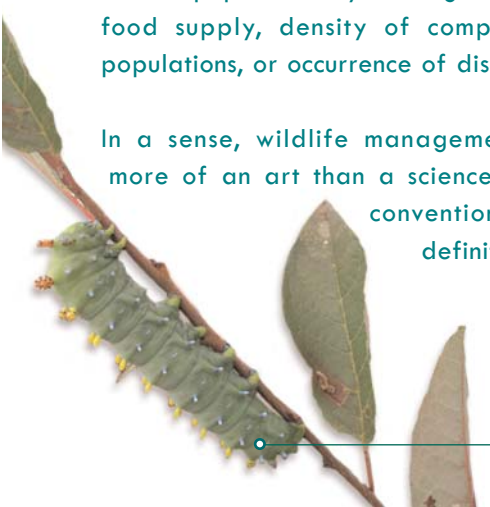


Rush Hour - Wildlife Underpasses Are One of Many Strategies Employed to Preserve Wildlife in Areas of Development

implies manipulation of the population of a wild organism. Wildlife management is more of an integration of many disciplines of science that are applied together in an attempt to achieve a foreseeable outcome. It can be applied in several different forms which include preservation, direct population manipulation, or indirect manipulation. Preservation refers to management techniques that basically allow natural processes to take their course without human intervention. Direct population manipulation implies altering populations by hunting, trapping, shooting, or

stocking. Indirect manipulation, which may be the most widely used method, influences populations by altering key components of a population's habitat, such as food, water, and cover.

It is no secret that one of the main factors affecting loss of wildlife and wildlife diversity is loss of habitat. Much of this habitat loss can be linked to humans and their use of the landscape. This is simply a result of the natural growth of the human population and the increased need for resources. Wildlife management and



Cecropia Moth Caterpillar

habitat management can play a role in the development of the best strategies to accommodate humans' unavoidable need for resources and the desire to protect and preserve natural environments and biological diversity.

Habitat management is basically a matter of being aware of the effects humans will have on the environment and adjusting our land use based on a value placed on that environment. With expanding populations and the growing use of resources, it is often



A Juvenile Bog Turtle

difficult to balance our need for resources and the increasing need to conserve existing habitats and biodiversity. One of the hardest parts of habitat management is being able to establish clear goals that are feasible and compatible with surrounding land

uses and future plans for the land. Habitat management can be accomplished using a variety of approaches, including preservation, conservation, or mitigation. For example, if one intends to preserve an existing tract of land as a wildlife sanctuary, it would be best if that tract can be connected to other existing tracts of land rather than creating an isolated island of habitat. Conversely, in planning for transportation or urban development projects, adjusting a plan to reduce fragmentation of existing habitat benefits the landscape on an environmental level by providing larger continuous tracts of habitat.

As environmental consultants, it is our goal to work cooperatively with our clients and with regulatory agencies to coordinate the needs of the client with the enforcement of natural resource regulations. These regulations are in place to provide protection of vital biological and natural resources for the benefit of the environment. When a proposed project conflicts with a natural resource of concern, we provide the information and expertise necessary to avoid or minimize impacts to the resource.



Surveying Wetlands for Threatened and Endangered Amphibians



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Mr. Thompson is a Wildlife Biologist with five years experience in wildlife management, habitat assessments, forestry, and wildlife research. He has extensive knowledge of threatened and endangered species as well as invasive species.

