

## Wildlife Preservation Promotes a Healthy Environment

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We can never have enough land set aside for wildlife preservations. It not only benefits the animals that live in the area, but the environment as a whole. Some of the threats to wilderness are things such as logging, mining, development, roads or trails, and the list goes on. If the trees go then many of the forest inhabitants will also go. When the land around a stream or river is logged or cut irresponsibly, erosion usually sets in. Instead of the rain being slowed down and absorbed by trees and plants, it hits the ground and runs off. A mature oak can absorb up to fifty gallons of water a day. The roots from trees also help to stabilize the sides of the river which help prevent some erosion. If erosion occurs, first, the native vegetation is washed away from the banks. After most of the vegetation is gone sediment begins to enter the river with the rain water. This affects the water clarity and can build up enough to change the path and direction that the river flows. Previous logging on the local Yellow Dog River shows that this can happen. The true path that the river used to flow is still debated.

After the trees are cut down the logging companies will sometimes replant them for future harvest. Usually a single type of tree is mass planted creating a monoculture. If a disease spreads throughout the population of trees then all of them will perish leaving the landscape barren. The creation of a monoculture not only looks bad because of the manmade rows, but it also doesn't allow for the growth of different trees and plants that the native animals need to survive. Monoculture plantations are of the same age and provide little to no cover or source of forage for animals.

Many animals use rivers as a water source and if the area were to be developed the animals would not be able to easily access the river. These animals would then have to relocate or maybe even just die out, which could cause problems. Many animals need large natural areas to thrive to avoid causing territory or resource dispute. These animals are commonly hunted for recreation and if the areas they live in change, they will be forced to leave.

Plants and animals aren't the only things that need water. Humans need clean water and air, which the wilderness provides. Marshes are natural water filters and all the plants provide fresh air. The best way to keep an ecosystem healthy and functioning is to help it remain as pristine as possible. The benefits of wilderness preservation are much higher than the costs. If a healthy ecosystem makes a healthy environment then why would we stop setting aside land for them? It is clearly a better choice that benefits not just this generation, but ensures a better environment for many generations to come.