

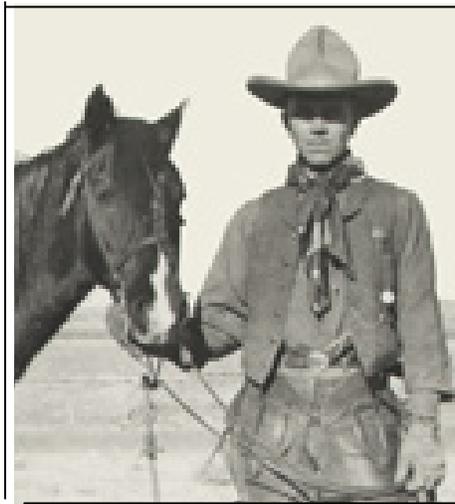
Wilderness: A Forest Service Legacy



The Forest Service, through efforts of Arthur Carhart, Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall, produced the first allocation of public land specifically for wilderness values in America, and, indeed, in the world. We take great pride of authorship and leadership stemming from these early efforts. As we prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we reflect on the wilderness legacy of these conservation giants and, in keeping with our proud tradition and benefiting our role as world leaders in wilderness stewardship, embrace our responsibility to the American people to ensure an enduring resource of wilderness.



Arthur Carhart



Aldo Leopold



Bob Marshall

In 1919, Arthur Carhart, the first landscape architect in the Forest Service, surveyed Trappers Lake on the White River National Forest in CO for road access and several hundred vacation homes. Upon completion of the project he recommended that the area be preserved in its natural condition for its aesthetic and recreational benefits. He shared this thinking with another FS employee who had become apprehensive about the expansion of road systems into wild country, Aldo Leopold. Carhart followed this recommendation with a similar one for the Superior National Forest in MN. Trappers Lake remains without roads or summer homes within the Flattops Wilderness and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is a keystone of the NWPS.

In 1922, Aldo Leopold, assistant district forester, made an inspection trip into the headwaters of the Gila River. Upon his return, he wrote a wilderness plan for the area to preserve its ecological values. Only trails and telephone lines, to be used in case of forest fires, were to be permitted. He felt wilderness was an ideal laboratory for the study of natural processes and that wilderness was the forge upon which the American national character had been created. Leopold spent nearly 20 years with the FS, helped train a generation of conservation and wildlife leaders, and produced *A Sand County Almanac* a classic in American conservation literature. In 1924, 574,000 acres of the Gila were designated as the first wilderness reserve in the world.

In 1939, Bob Marshall, FS director of recreation and lands, drafted regulations designating administrative wilderness, wild areas and roadless areas. Marshall, a forester and plant pathologist by training, was a prodigious hiker penetrating the nation's wildest remaining corners including the Brooks Range in AK. He valued wilderness for its experiential and social values and was concerned that roads threatened to divide and conquer the last large wildernesses in the West. The U Regulations Marshall authored prevented road construction, timber harvest, hotels, lodges, or permanent camps on more than 14 million acres of national forest lands. Along with Leopold, Marshall was instrumental in establishing The Wilderness Society in 1935.