

# FISH AND WILDLIFE VALUES in THE WEST

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Western states are going through a number of changes that have affected and will continue to affect wildlife management. Changes include population growth, changes in in-migration rates and land ownership patterns, increasing income and education levels, growth in technology, and urbanization. The recent study, **Wildlife Values in the West**, explores how some of these broad societal forces are shaping the composition of public values toward wildlife throughout the western region. **Wildlife Values in the West** is a project of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Human Dimensions Committee. It is a collaborative regional effort involving social science researchers from Colorado State University and representatives from 19 participating state fish and wildlife agencies who assisted in development of a mail survey. Data were collected through administration of the survey to a sample of residents in each state in the fall of 2004 ( $n = 12,673$ ). Results and related implications from this 19-state effort will be discussed, including the impacts value shift may have on public acceptance of wildlife management strategies and on demand for participation in wildlife-related recreation activities in Montana. We will also discuss how study results provide a broad context to assist state fish and wildlife agencies better understand diverse publics and plan for the future of wildlife management in the west.